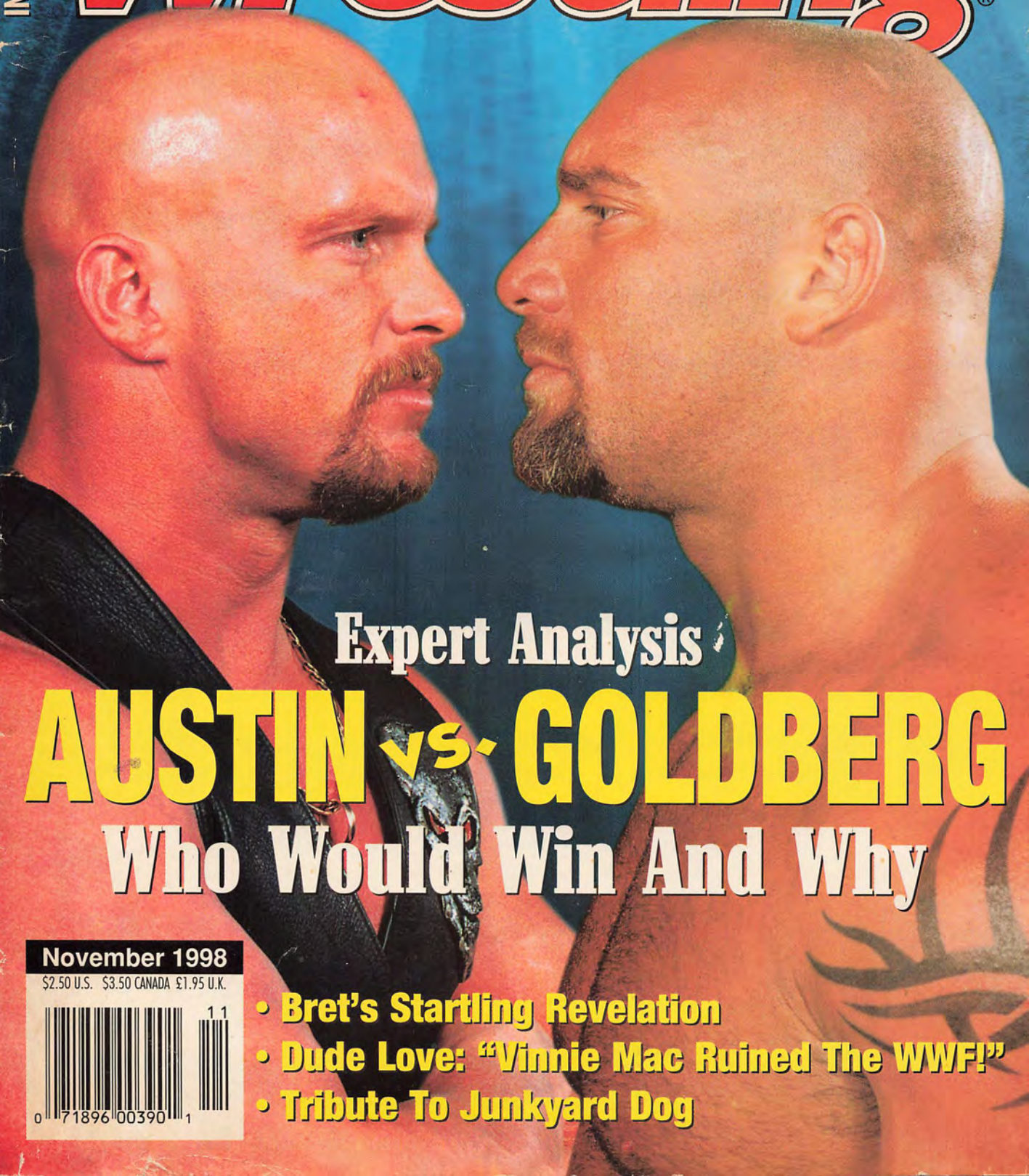


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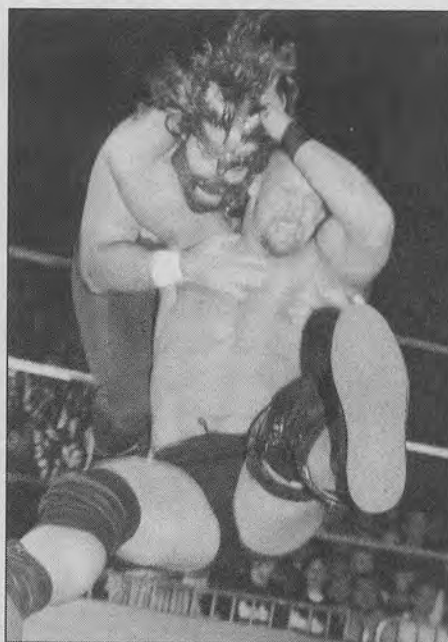
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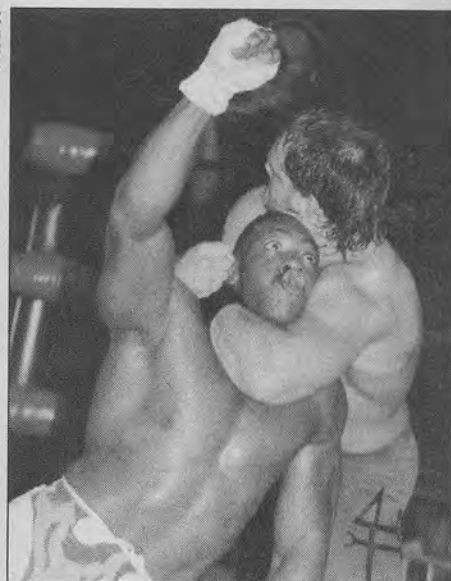
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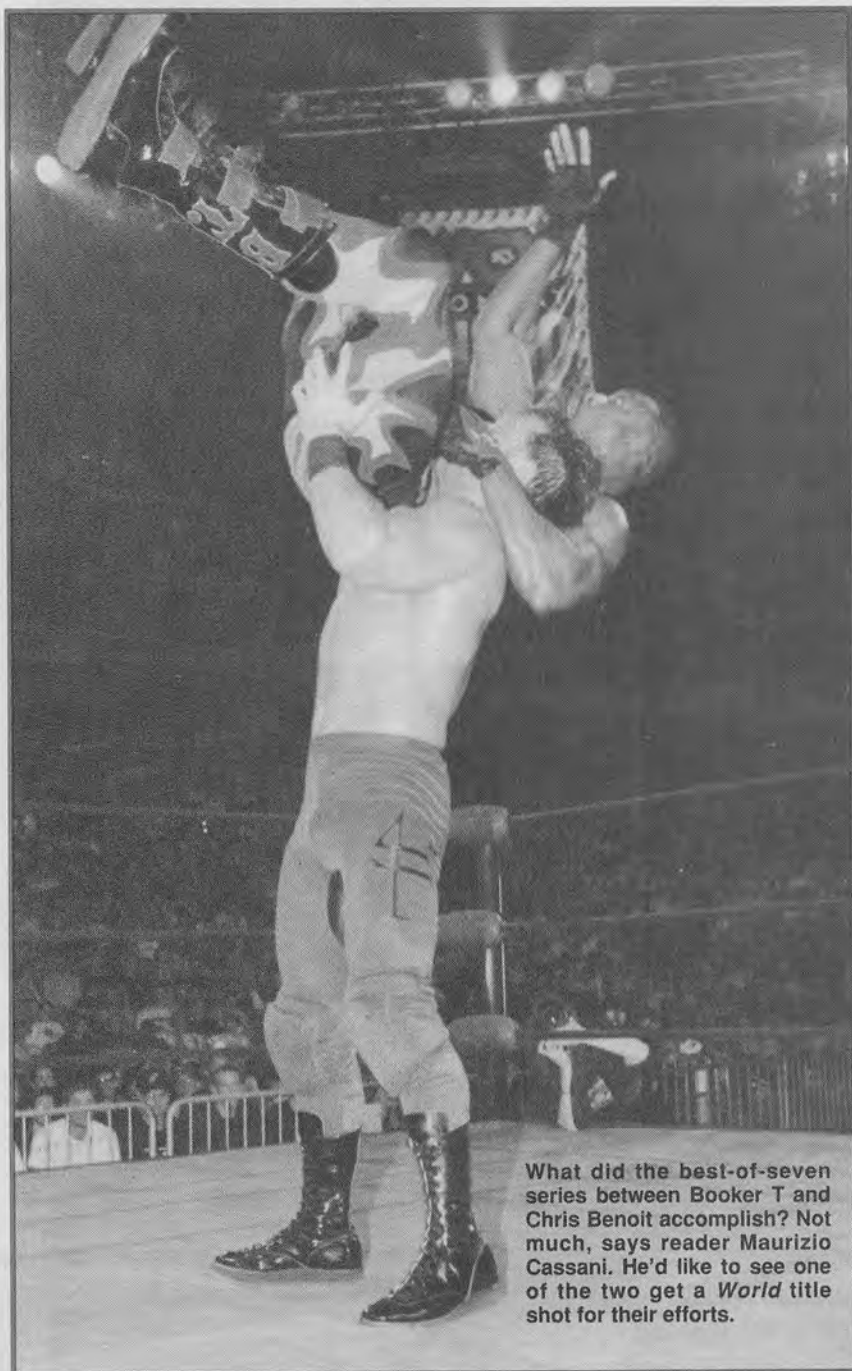


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September 29, 1998

Sincerely Yours

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What did the best-of-seven series between Booker T and Chris Benoit accomplish? Not much, says reader Maurizio Cassani. He'd like to see one of the two get a *World* title shot for their efforts.

WASTE OF TIME?

I found the Chris Benoit vs. Booker T best-of-seven series of bouts exciting, but at the same time, I feel it was a waste for both of these guys to fight each other so hard for only a shot at the TV belt.

Everybody knows that regardless of the outcome, Booker T and Benoit are going to keep on battling each other. I just hope either Chris or Booker gets rewarded for his efforts with a shot at the World belt. Otherwise, their series of violent matches could destroy both of them.

MAURIZIO CASSANI
Milan, Italy

After watching the best-of-seven series between Booker T and Chris Benoit, I have come to the conclusion that WCW should spend more time focusing on these guys and the cruiserweight division than on both factions of the NWO. This series brought back great memories of the outstanding series between Magnum T.A. and Nikita Koloff in 1986 for the then-vacant NWA U.S. title. Just as with the Magnum-Koloff series, the Booker-Benoit series showcased two competitors who deserve more recognition and respect from the promotion. For the first time in a long time, I found myself excited to watch a WCW program.

I hope WCW's Executive Committee and J.J. Dillon take notice that the fans appreciated these matches for their impressive displays of athleticism. It's matches like these that will keep the true wrestling fans from turning the channel.

MICHELLE JOHNSON
Scranton, PA

BRAWL FOR ALL

I just watched a boxing/wrestling match between Savio Vega and Brakus on *Raw Is War*. Brakus might be strong, but he was completely musclebound and so



Here's the 1998 King of the Ring, Ken Shamrock, suplexing I-C champ Rocky Maivia. According to Richard Moore, Shamrock has proven he can beat "The Rock." It's time to bring on Austin.

immobile that he had a hard time lifting his hands to throw a punch. Savio, on the other hand, showed great boxing form and completely outclassed The big German, whose career I hope will survive such an embarrassing display. Win or lose, any wrestler who steps outside his realm of expertise and puts on the gloves should be commended for taking a chance.

GERALD HOOKINGS
Houston, TX

KING KEN

Congratulations to Ken Shamrock on becoming the WWF's 1998 King of the Ring. If anyone deserves the crown, it is Shamrock. He has survived numerous attacks from the Nation and a fractured ankle. In a sport that is being overrun with gangs, it is good to see a real man like Shamrock take

care of business with only his own two hands. The WWF needs more wrestlers like him. I hope Vince McMahon gives Shamrock a shot at Steve Austin's World belt soon. He is the only wrestler in the WWF who can match Austin's attitude. Let's see if McMahon does the right thing.

RICH MOORE
Atlantic City, NJ

POWER SURGE

Bill Goldberg? Maybe. But Chris Jericho and Booker T? Never. These guys will never share the spotlight with both NWO groups, as Harry Burkett suggests ("Power Surge! While The NWO

Fiddles ... These Men Are Burning!" September 1998). First of all, Jericho is feuding with Dean Malenko over the cruiserweight title, and Booker T has been tied up with Chris Benoit for the TV title. Both men have better things to do than get involved with either NWO. Besides, being able to watch wrestlers who are *not* in the NWO is what keeps me tuning in to WCW on Monday night.

MELANIE HILL
Provo, UT

POWER SURGE II

The NWO will never let Bill Goldberg near them, because he would beat the crap out of every single one of them—hands-down, no contest, in a matter of seconds. Just look how quickly he defeated Hogan for the World title. No one in The Wolfpac or
(Continued on page 52)

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REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By Stu Saks

When Mike Chapman was growing up, other kids must have thought he was a little weird. While all the other kids were idolizing Mickey, Willie, and The Duke, Chapman was consumed with the careers of men like Frank Gotch, Joe Stecher, Verne Gagne, and Lou Thesz. Of course, not many of Chapman's old cronies have parlayed their love of sports into achieving a lifelong dream, as Mike will on September 19 and 20 with the grand opening of the International Wrestling Institute and Museum in Newton, Iowa.

The opening of this museum is exciting news for fans of both amateur and professional wrestling. Six Olympic champions and pro legends Thesz, Gagne, and Dan Hodge will be on hand for the festivities, which will include special presentations, giveaways, free snacks, and wrestling and combat seminars. Attendees will have an opportunity to pose in a 14 x 14 ring with Thesz, Gagne, and Hodge. Former Olympic gold medalist Dan Gable, a member of the museum's advisory panel, will also be on hand.

Prominent among the museum's features is its 200 square foot "Wall Of Heavyweight Champions" with photos in varying sizes of every pro champ from 1900 through the early-'70s. Another exhibit of interest to pro fans will be "The Bridge Between The Amateur And Pro Worlds," which honors such amateur greats-turned-pro as Hodge, Earl Caddock, Robin Reed, Gagne, Dick Hutton, Jack Brisco, and Gorilla Monsoon, who I was surprised to learn was a runner-up for the NCAA championship while competing as Bob Marella at Ithaca College.

According to Chapman, there will be a two-day festival next April 23 and 24 in conjunction with the Cauliflower Alley Club at which four former world champions—Frank Gotch, Ed "Strangler" Lewis, Gagne, and Thesz—will be inducted into the Institute's Hall of Fame.

"This has been a lifetime dream since my grandfather first told me about Frank Gotch and Joe Stecher," said Chapman, 54, who received two donations in excess of \$100,000 to help make that dream a reality. "I think it's really important to wrestling. This sport deserves to have its history preserved, just like baseball, football, and basketball."

For more information, contact the museum at (515) 797-1517.

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NAMES MA

HERE'S A SURPRISE for you: "**Diamond**" **Dallas Page** feels he is somewhat responsible for **Bill Goldberg** winning the WCW World championship from **Hollywood Hogan** on July 6. His reasoning:



DALLAS PAGE

"Me and **Karl Malone** saw to it that none of Hogan's NWO goons got to interfere. I mean, if we weren't watching Goldberg's back, **Curt Hennig** would have gotten in there and gotten Hogan disqualified, so he would still be the champion today," Page told me. "No problem, glad to do it, but, Billy boy, sooner or later you're gonna have to return the favor by giving me a title shot."

Shawn Michaels' back is starting to feel a little better (he has two herniated disks), but one of his close confidantes, **Jose Lothario**, isn't sure Shawn will ever wrestle again.

"Even if his doctors say he can wrestle again, there is always that risk of re-injury, and if that happens, you worry about him being crippled,"

Lothario said. "You know that Shawn uses a high-risk style, and if he does get back into the ring, that style could be his downfall. I'd advise him at this point to think real hard. He must weigh the risks. If I were Shawn, I'd find a comfortable spot at the broadcast table and finish off my career that way."

Power Pro Wrestling promoter **Randy Hales**, who has been at odds with **Jerry Lawler** over the past few months, has infuriated Lawler by bringing the new WWF giant, **Paul Silva**, to Memphis. Lawler, considered the "King Of Memphis" since the mid-'70s, was knocked off his unofficial throne when Hales declared Silva "**The Giant King**."

"A giant and a mental midget—that's some pair," Lawler said. "No matter what Randy Hales says, the people of Memphis know there is only one 'King,' and that's me!" By the way, Lawler will be featured in the upcoming Universal pictures release *Man On The Moon*, the story of comedian **Andy Kaufman's**

life. If you recall, Lawler made national headlines when he feuded with Kaufman in 1982. **Jim Carrey** will star as Kaufman; wrestler **Mike Samples** is training him for the wrestling scenes.

Paul Ellering stunned us all when he turned against **LOD 2000** and wound up managing their arch-rivals, **Skull** and **Eight-Ball**. "LOD never changed with the times," Ellering explained. "They are like yesterday's garbage. What do you do with yesterday's garbage? You throw it out—and that's what the WWF should do to those two washed-up wrestlers! It's hard for me to believe that the two men who I made into stars have turned into such pathetic creatures. How utterly distressing!"



SUNNY

By the way, **Sunny**, who hasn't been in LOD's corner lately, wants to tell her fans that she has *not* deserted **Hawk** and **Animal**. She contracted a viral infection while on vacation in Mexico and had trouble getting over it ... Former ECW Commissioner **Tod Gordon** insists it was not him who ordered several



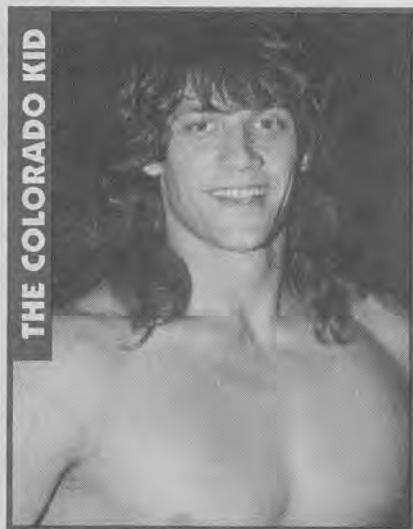
JERRY LAWLER

KIN' NEWS

By Bill Apter

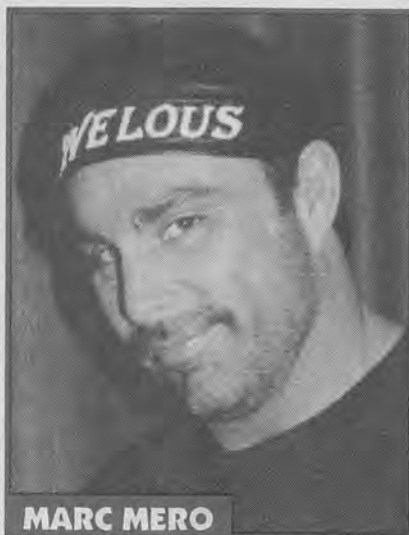
ex-ECW stars to attack NWA promoter **Dennis Coraluzzo** recently, although the masked man orchestrating the attack was dressed in a business suit and was built just like Gordon. "No way," Gordon told me. "I'm out of the wrestling game. Why someone would drag my name into this ugly incident is beyond me."

THE COLORADO KID



If you like country music, be sure to look for **The Colorado Kid** in the new **Shania Twain** and **Kenny Chesney** videos. "Notice that they asked me, not that country music phony **Jeff Jarrett**, to be in the videos," Colorado pointed out ... **George "The Animal" Steele** has been stripped of the Grande Wrestling Alliance heavyweight title. Attorneys representing former champion **Bob Steele** convinced GWA officials that the night Bob lost the belt, he never signed a contract stipulating the match would be for the title ... Veteran **Brian Adias** has won the NWA Southwest Texas title from **Critical Mass** ... The very powerful **Rhino Richards** has defeated **Giant Warrior** for the Pro Wrestling Worldwide title.

Marc Mero called to inform me that he deserves the credit for bringing **Sable** back to the WWF—even though he was the reason she had to leave in the first place. "I am a very philanthropic person," he said, "and I could not live with the fact that Sable was going to be out on the streets begging for food and money because of the match stipulation that forced her to leave. Out of the goodness of my heart, I contacted **Vince McMahon** and got her back into the WWF. I am a truly marvelous man."



MARC MERO

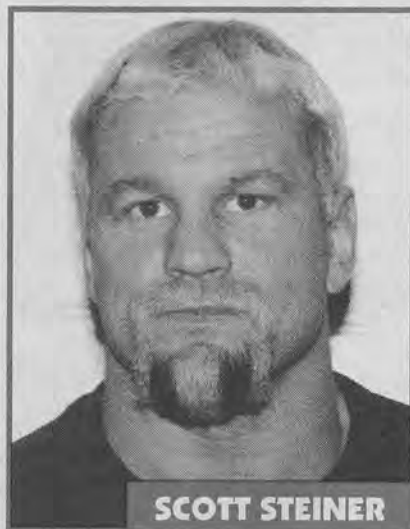
Tully Blanchard has come out of semi-retirement and is feuding with **Buddy Landell** in North Carolina's New Dimension Wrestling ... After losing the ECW tag team title to **Rob Van Dam** and **Sabu**, **Lance Storm** and **Chris Candido** are again bickering. "Candido got pinned. He dropped the ball," said Storm. "He paid no attention to the match. He was more interested in kissing his muscles and posing for the fans. He is the consummate unprofessional."

Said Candido: "I was in the ring

most of the time, and when I was double-teamed over and over again, he did nothing to help me. He wanted us to lose the belts. It's all his fault!"

Will o' the Wisp has returned from Japan after having beaten **Ikuto Hidaka** for the UWA middleweight title ... **Christian Cage** and **Glen Osbourne** are feuding in Delaware's ECWA ... California's APW will hold a tournament to determine a TV champion later this year.

"**Superstar**" **Scott Steiner** is now telling me he has a lot of regrets about his wrestling career. "I could have spent those years as a leading man in some of Hollywood's classic films," he said. "I should have been a wrestler *and* an actor the whole time. How the public has been deprived. I apologize to every-



SCOTT STEINER

one from the bottom of my heart. But, to make up for it, look for me to appear soon at a theater near you. I'll be on the giant screen in all my marvelous splendor!"

That's all for now. I'll see you at the matches!

"PRECIOUS" PAUL Ellering, PWI's Manager of the Year for 1984. You can look it up. That same year, the team he managed, The Road Warriors, won Tag Team of the Year. You can look up that, too. And, until recently, Ellering and The Road Warriors got along nicely, even though he was no longer managing Hawk and Animal. Then something happened.

"They called me one day, a few weeks before WrestleMania XIV," Ellering started, "and Hawk says, 'We're thinking of taking Sunny as our manager.' I said, 'Who?' And Animal says, 'You know, Sunny. One of the smartest young minds in

ON THE ROAD

With Dave Lenker

this business. She knows what she's doing.'

"And I said, 'Oh, you mean the blonde who wears all those skimpy outfits?' Because that's all she was to me. Sure, I knew she was a manager. I was just playing games with Hawk and Animal. But I also knew I didn't think much of her. So I told them, 'Don't do it. She's a money-grubber. It's a big mistake.'

"So what do they do? They hire her anyway. And like I said, it was a big mistake."

Ellering had a point. LOD 2000, as the group is now known, put together a nice string of victories after WrestleMania XIV. Sunny

put an end to the bickering between Animal and Hawk—bickering that, according to Ellering, "was par for the course and nothing unusual between two friends." But they couldn't unseat The New Age Outlaws for the belts at Unforgiven, lost several discouraging matches, then got caught up in a feud with The Disciples of Apocalypse.

"Now, let me ask you a question," Ellering said as we sat over coffee in a restaurant near Civic Arena in Pittsburgh. "Over the years, I was accused of not keeping Animal and Hawk focused enough on titles and letting them get involved in too many secondary feuds. Well, if I was guilty of that, then what are they doing right now? The Disciples of Apocalypse? What's the point? I gotta talk to those guys."

Ellering didn't bother answering his own question, and I didn't bother posing it to Sunny, but it seemed strange when, a week later, Ellering showed up at *Raw* as the manager of DOA. That was one disconcerting night. Hawk and Animal brought out Ellering and proclaimed him as their mentor, but then Ellering called out the DOA, and Skull and Eight-Ball proceeded to beat the living daylights out of LOD 2000. I can't remember the last time any team sneak-attacked and so brutally beat up Hawk and Animal.

"It never *used* to happen," Ellering insisted. "Hawk and Animal have always been the ones doing the butt-kicking, but this time they got their

(Continued on page 54)



Hawk and Animal were by far the most dominant force in tag team wrestling in 1984, when they were voted Tag Team of the Year by PWI readers, and Paul Ellering was voted Manager of the Year. A lot has changed in 14 years.

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Behind the Dressing Room Door

By Dave Rosenbaum

PAUL BEARER WAS thrilled when his son won the WWF World title by beating Steve Austin at King of the Ring. Seeing this was heartwarming, because these days we're hearing far too much about deadbeat fathers who impregnate women, then leave when the going gets tough. Not Bearer, who's proud of being Kane's father. So proud that, according to my WWF sources, he receives 15 percent of every dollar Kane makes.

In other words, this makes Bearer no better than a lot of tennis parents and figure-skating parents, using his child—his alleged child, I might add—as his money ticket.

And about that "alleged" thing. A lot of wrestling fans still refuse to believe Kane is Paul Bearer's son. I do, too. I know Bearer had that DNA test done a few months, but I'm still not convinced. I think it's some kind of twisted gimmick dreamed up by Bearer—or maybe WWF owner Vince McMahon—to boost TV ratings.

Now, as we all know, Vince McMahon would never resort to such cheap tricks to boost ratings and sell tickets. After all, this is the man who had Lawrence Taylor wrestle Bam Bam Bigelow and hired Mike Tyson as a "spe-

cial enforcer."

But here's my point: Kane is somebody's child. Somebody gave birth to this angry monstrosity. Obviously, his parents were no lookers, either. And Paul Bearer is one of the strangest-looking men I've ever seen. He's a prime candidate to have been Kane's father.

Truth: As of press time, I had not been able to find a single woman who would admit to having ever dated Bearer. In fact, the general reaction when I asked, "Have you ever dated Paul Bearer?" was, "Do I really look that desperate?"

Some of them looked pretty desperate, but obviously not desperate enough to have dated Bearer. Or, perish the thought, to have kissed him.

But Undertaker's mother? A woman who owned a funeral parlor? Seducing the hired help? I

can believe that. Let's face it, funeral parlor workers are not reputed to be among the best-looking women in the world. *Playboy* has never come out with a "Women Of The Funeral Parlors" pictorial. It's easy to believe that a desperate woman who owned a funeral parlor seduced a man as slovenly looking as Paul Bearer.

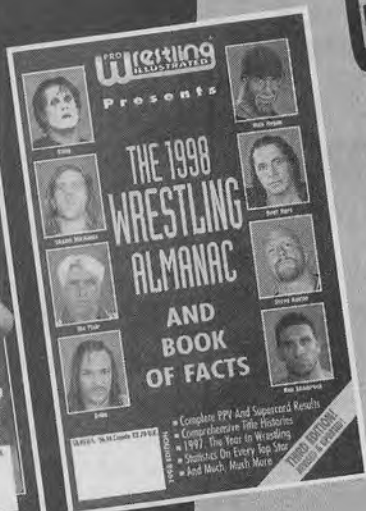
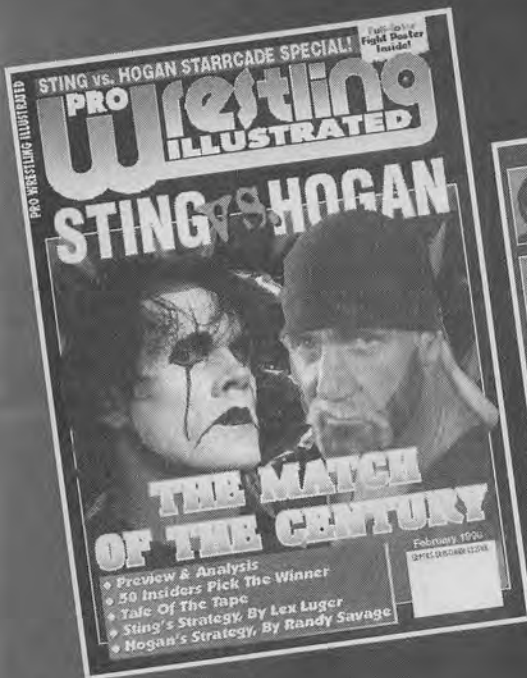
As fathers go, Bearer was one proud papa after Kane beat Austin. "My boy! My boy! The WWF champion!" he exulted. "I'm so proud of my son. It just goes to show the greatness that runs in the Bearer genes."

He sounded like a little league parent who had just watched his son smash a home run. He was much quieter—and certainly not screaming, "My boy! My boy!" one night later at *Raw*, when Kane lost

(Continued on page 55)



Kane made his father, Paul Bearer, very proud when he defeated Steve Austin for the WWF World title at King of the Ring. He couldn't have been too proud of Kane's performance against Austin the very next night.



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the Insider

by Brandi Mankiewicz

(The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Brandi Mankiewicz alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.)

SAY IT AIN'T so, Kev. Please, please say it ain't so.

Say you have not turned good in the midst of one of the most impressive rulebreaking

stunts since Larry Z cracked Bruno with a wooden chair.

Nash's return to wrestling hero and role model was heinous and outright deceptive. He wants that big piece of tasty, rulebreaking cake, and he wants to be able to eat it, too. He struts, talks, and acts like a rulebreaker, but do not let his actions fool you. He changed colors in more ways than one. He might as well have kept

the white that symbolizes the spineless do-gooders that I have come to loathe.

I understood his need to break the New World Order in two. Actually, I rather liked the concept of two renegade factions battling WCW and each other. Scott Hall seemingly decided to stay with Hollywood. So Nash had the opportunity to assemble his very own NWO and break out on his own. He stuck with Konnan and, for a while, Curt Hennig. However, it was two personnel additions that soured me on Nash and his *formerly* renegade group.

Lex Luger's recruitment startled me a bit, but not entirely. After all, Luger has a rich history of turning bad when the wind pushes him in that direction. But the addition of *Sting* pushed me over the edge and convinced me that this Wolfpac is nothing more than a subsidiary of WCW. Sting proved what a hypocrite he is when he pulled on that shirt and changed his primary face paint tint. So much for the "Stinger" being traumatized by those three letters: N, W, and O.

If that were not enough, the recruitment of "Diamond" Dallas Page was enough to make me run screaming into the night. What could this guy do for your group that Luger and Sting had not already done? Why not just put out an open cattle call to every fan favorite in WCW, then agree to a merger and stop tainting the good name of the NWO and all it stands for?

In fact, a sickening stench covered the entire promotion as Nash's group and WCW made peace with each other. This is not how an NWO group is supposed to function. What happened to the rebel Nash—the Nash who led chants of "At-ti-ca! At-ti-ca!" whenever security would lead him away? That was classic NWO. But those days are long gone.

While I am on the subject, let
(Continued on page 56)



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ON Assignment

By Liz Hunter

IS CHANGE ALWAYS good?

Bret Hart seems to be finding out the hard way that it isn't.

Weeks before Bret was "screwed" out of the WWF title back in November, he had decided to make the big jump to WCW. He felt the new setting would be just the thing to prevent career stagnation. He thought that WCW fans would welcome a new face and cheer on a hero who was willing to fighting for what he

thought was right.

Ironically, from my perspective, Bret's career has only become *more* stagnant since he arrived in WCW. He was welcomed at first, when he pledged his allegiance to WCW, but was scorned when he started feuding with Ric Flair. The cheers began to fade. A few more boos were directed his way. He wasn't even featured prominently on *Nitro* on a regular basis.



As the occasional tag team partner of Hollywood Hogan, Bret is ... not accomplishing much. Liz Hunter suggests that he turn against NWO Hollywood ASAP. If he doesn't, she says, he'll slip further into the background in WCW.

Heck, Waldo was easier to find in a group than Bret in the sea of WCW talent.

So what did Hart do? He shed his fan favorite skin and aligned himself with Hollywood Hogan. If he couldn't get the fans to cheer for him, he decided, he might as well encourage the boos. So the anti-American, anti-establishment Bret Hart was back. As Bret fully expected, fans began booing him again in earnest. But at least he seemed to be in his element again. At least he was a major player.

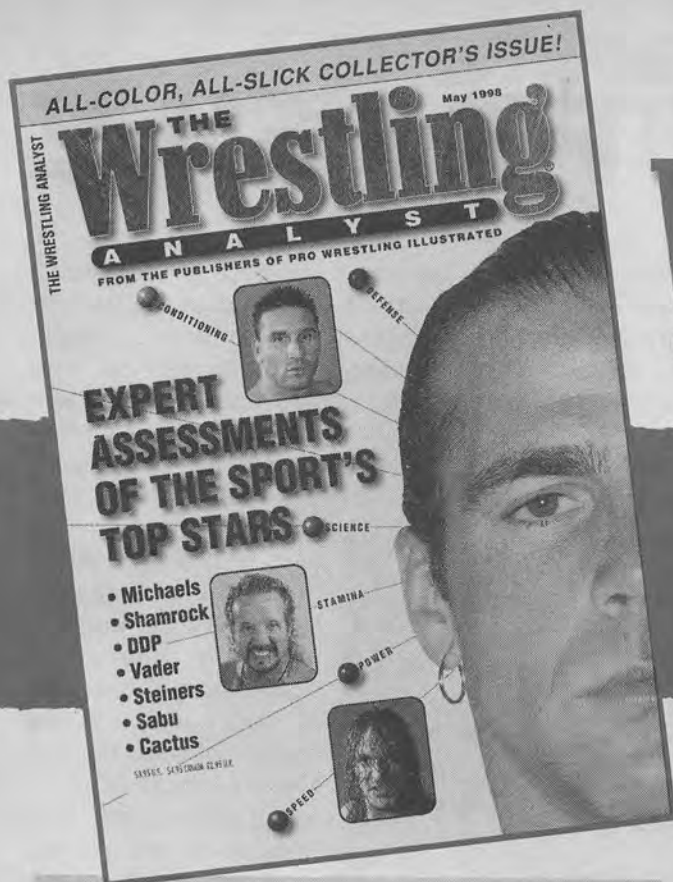
Did it make a difference?

Frankly, Bret hasn't made the impact that so many other big-name wrestlers who switched promotions made. In fact, Bret has yet to make any major impact in WCW. There have been minor rumblings, but I am still waiting for the full-blown earthquake. The "Hitman" cannot afford another day of just being one of many in WCW. He needs to push Hollywood out of the way and get the spotlight to shine on him ... and fast.

Think about some of those other major stars who made the big jump. Sid Vicious and Ric Flair moved from WCW to the WWF in 1991. Sid immediately gained main event status, while Flair started getting title shots at the get-go. In 1996, Kevin Nash and Scott Hall were put right in headline matches and received a tag title shot months into their WCW (or NWO) tenure.

Momentum is the key. If you are a superstar in one promotion, you should not have to start over in another. That has become an unwritten rule in wrestling these

(Continued on page 57)



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INSIDE WRESTLING CAPSULE PROFILE ²⁷²

SABLE

IT'S BEEN A while since wrestling fans last saw a blend of beauty and ability as striking as Sable. And this sexy valet-turned-wrestler has certainly

proven that she is more than just another pretty face ... Made her WWF debut at WrestleMania XII on March 31, 1996, serving as valet for Hunter Hearst Helmsley ... "Triple-H" berated her backstage after his loss to The Ultimate Warrior, drawing the wrath of Marc Mero, who saved Sable's honor by exchanging blows with the blue blood ... The very next night, Sable ditched Helmsley on *Raw* and went over to Mero's side (*"Marc was a gentleman back then"*) ... Was in Mero's corner when he defeated Faarooq in a tournament final to capture the Intercontinental title on September 23, 1996 ... Got into a shoving match with Sunny, Faarooq's manager, when she tried to interfere in the match ... Mero dedicated the victory to Sable and presented her with the belt (*"See, I was good for Marc's career"*) ...

Remained in Mero's corner after he lost the I-C belt to Hunter Hearst Helmsley and gained the support and affection of the crowd ... Eventually became more popular than Mero, which drove him

crazy ... While Mero recuperated from a serious knee injury, Sable regularly modeled WWF merchandise on *Raw* ... Wore a very skimpy bathing suit and was voted Miss Slammy at the 1997 Slammy Awards ... When Mero returned to competition, he reacted to Sable's



For the better part of two years, Sable and Marc Mero were the closest of friends in the WWF, but now they are sworn enemies. What can we expect from Sable now that Mero has replaced her with Jacquelyn?

popularity by publicly dressing her down on TV ... Learned how to endure his tirades (*"He's just an immature little boy"*) ... To the dismay of the fans, Mero often banished Sable to the dressing room

while he wrestled ... Tom Brandi came to Sable's defense, but she remained loyal to Mero ... Began feuding with Luna Vachon, who also resented Sable's beauty and popularity ... During one memorable edition of *Raw*, Luna handcuffed her to the ringpost, then smeared makeup all over her face ... Stole the show at WrestleMania XIV by showing up Mero when she power-bombed and pinned Luna in a tag match that pitted her and Mero against Goldust and Luna (*"Beat that witch at her own game"*) ... Lost an "evening gown" match at Unforgiven when Luna stripped her down to her bra and panties ... Agreed to face Mero in a match at Over the Edge in May ... If Mero lost, Sable would be relieved of her contractual obligations to him. If Sable lost, she would have to leave the WWF forever ... Mero got down on the mat seemingly to let Sable cover him, then rolled her up in a small package for the pinfall victory (*"That was the lowest thing he's ever done!"*)

... Since then, Mero has taken on Jacquelyn as his new manager ... Curiously, Vince McMahon allowed Sable to return to the WWF a few weeks later ... Her presence at ringside always distracts Mero and has already cost him several victories (*"The more miserable he is, the happier I'll be!"*).



SABLE

Where Are They NOW

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



TONY ANTHONY

The "Dirty White Boy" still wrestles regularly in the Deep South and is the reigning NWA United Atlantic champ. "Buddy Landell is tryin' his damndest to win my belt, but he ain't gonna do it," Anthony boasted. Tony also points out that he has his Kimberly

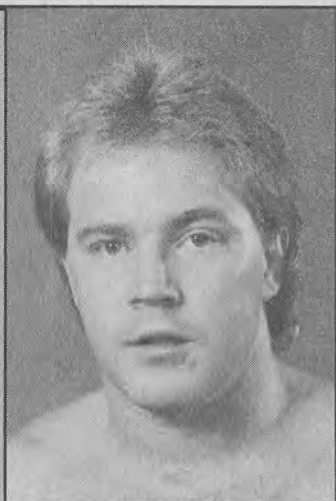
back. "We had some rough times for a while, but everything is back a-okay," he added. "With Kimberly in my corner again, I get all the inspiration I need to keep this gold around my waist."



BILL DROMO

Once one of the most popular wrestlers in the South and on the West Coast, Dromo had a fine tag team and singles career. Some of his most memorable feuds were with the likes of The Destroyer and Ivan Kalmikoff. He and Bob Armstrong also had

some brutal matches with the Anderson brothers, Flash and Rocket Monroe, and The Assassins. Dromo retired in the early-'80s to go into the food business. These days he operates a Polish delicatessen in Smyrna, Georgia.



TIM HORNER

Though he's still active on the Southern independent scene, Horner spends most of his time working in a silk-screening business in Tennessee that he started in the '80s. "Hey, I still got the itch to go back into the major leagues," Horner admitted. "I look at

some of the great athletes in WCW, like Dean Malenko, Eddy Guerrero, and Chris Jericho, and I want to try my luck against them. I've talked to some WCW talent scouts, and maybe I'll be back there soon."



PAUL DeMARCO

Mr. Paul DeMarco, as he demanded to be called, was one of the most hated wrestlers on the West Coast. And competing against the likes of Rocky Johnson and Pepper Gomez, he *earned* the fans' hatred. His biggest achievement came when

he won the U.S. heavyweight title as recognized by California's Roy Shire's promotion. Today DeMarco runs a wrestling school near Sacramento. "I teach guys how to wrestle and what it takes to be brutally tough," he said.

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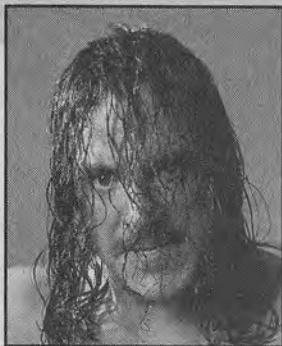
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NEWS FROM THE

YORK, PA
BY JEFF AMDUR



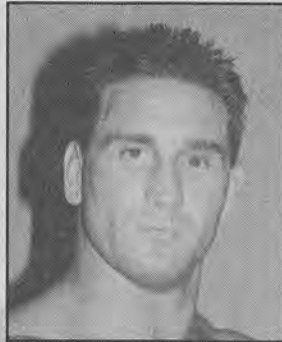
MIKEY WHIPWRECK
VS.
SABU



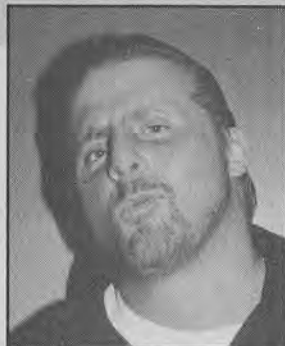
Sabu and Mikey got straight down to action in this match and exchanged offensive moves and pin attempts early on. Mikey dropkicked Sabu from the ring, but missed on a plancha attempt. Back in the ring, the two continued their back-and-forth struggle with both taking to the air in their onslaught. Sabu finally gained an edge by utilizing his manager, Bill Alfonso. Sabu leaped from the top rope onto Mikey and pinned him as Fonzie held him down.

OTHER BOUTS: Chris Chetti pinned Danny Doring ... Super Nova & The Blue Meanie defeated Tracey Smothers & Little Guido ... ECW tag team champs Lance Storm & Chris Candido defeated Axl Rotten & Mahoney ... Justin Credible pinned Jerry Lynn ... Bam Bam Bigelow pinned Mike Lozansky ... ECW TV champ Rob Van Dam pinned John Kronus ... Spike Dudley, The Sandman, Tommy Dreamer, & New Jack defeated Jack Victory & Buh Buh Ray, D-Von, & "Big" Dick Dudley.

DALLAS, TX
BY VERONICA WYLES



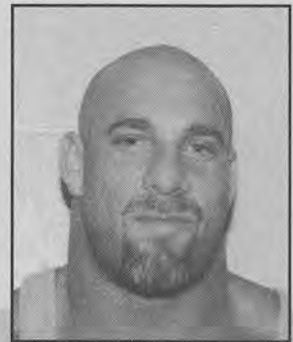
KEN SHAMROCK
VS.
OWEN HART



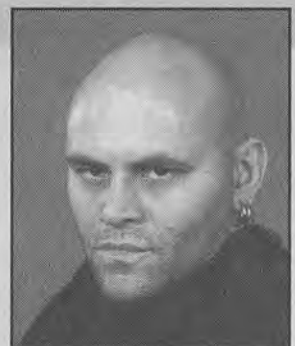
Which submission hold is better: Ken Shamrock's anklelock or Owen Hart's "sharpshooter"? Well, Shamrock's anklelock won on this night. Early on, both men traded offensive moves to try to wear each other down. Shamrock's huracanrana attempt was turned into a "sharpshooter" by Owen, but Shamrock reversed it into his anklelock. Owen soon realized he was trapped and had no choice but to tap out.

OTHER BOUTS: Taka Michinoku & Papi Chulo beat Brian Christopher & Scott Taylor ... Faarooq beat Mark Henry ... The Disciples of Apocalypse defeated The New Midnight Express ... Jeff Jarrett (with Tennessee Lee) beat Steve Blackman ... The Undertaker beat Kane in a no-disqualification match ... Bradshaw beat D-Lo Brown ... X-Pac, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Billy Gunn, & Jesse James beat Puke, Vader, & LOD 2000 ... WWF World champion "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin defeated Mankind.

PITTSBURGH, PA
BY JOHN S. PITHERS



BILL GOLDBERG
VS.
KONNAN

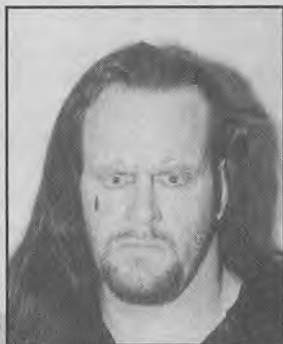


Goldberg continued his amazing undefeated streak this night at the A.J. Palumbo Center by pinning his scheduled opponent and winning an impromptu match immediately afterward as well. The first victim was Konnan, who was downed in less than a minute. Konnan tried to mount an offensive by throwing a few punches and a clothesline, but he was soon leveled by Goldberg's thunderous spear and "jackhammer." Following Goldberg's pin of Konnan, Sting answered Goldberg's challenge. Though Raven's Flock interfered, Goldberg still used a "jackhammer" on Sting and pinned him.

OTHER BOUTS: Chris Adams defeated Barry Darsow ... Marty Jannetty pinned Scotty Riggs ... Norman Smiley & Ciclope defeated Los Villanos IV & V ... Chavo Guerrero Jr. pinned Billy Kidman ... Public Enemy defeated High Voltage in a streetfight ... Dean Malenko defeated Chris Jericho ... Booker T pinned Chris Benoit.

WRESTLING CAPITALS

VANCOUVER, BC
BY NEIL O'BRIEN



THE UNDERTAKER
VS.
KANE



Kane attacked his half-brother before the bell even rang to start the match, but The Undertaker quickly retaliated. Once he turned back Kane's vicious assault, 'Taker went after Paul Bearer and even referee Earl Hebner. Bearer would eventually get his revenge by shaking the ropes as 'Taker was walking them, causing 'Taker to fall. Later, 'Taker survived a choke-slam and a few whacks from Bearer's shoe. He got the win after using a "tombstone" piledriver on Kane.

OTHER BOUTS: Jesse James & X-Pac defeated D-Lo Brown & Kama Mustafa ... Bradshaw pinned Savio Vega ... 2 Cold Scorpio pinned Marc Mero after Sable distracted Mero ... Skull & Eight-Ball beat LOD 2000 ... WWF European champ Hunter Hearst Helmsley beat Intercontinental champ Rocky Maivia by disqualification ... Vader beat Mark Henry by disqualification ... Jeff Jarrett pinned Steve Blackman ... Ken Shamrock beat Owen Hart by submission.

BALTIMORE, MD
BY RAY NEY



STING
VS.
THE GIANT



These former tag team partners squared off to see who would get to keep the WCW World tag team belts. The Giant entered the ring smoking a cigarette and blew smoke into Sting's face. Sting in turn slapped The Giant, then nailed him with a "Stinger splash." Sting tried for another, but got a boot to the face instead. Later, after both men got several near-falls, Sting hit the big man with three Scorpion deathdrops, the last one coming from the top rope, to get the win and the belts.

OTHER BOUTS: Booker T pinned Chris Benoit ... Canyon defeated Perry Saturn ... Chris Jericho defeated Dean Malenko by disqualification ... Juventud Guerrera pinned Reese ... Chavo Guerrero Jr. pinned Eddy Guerrero ... Booker T pinned WCW TV champion Dave "Fit" Finlay to win the title ... WCW U.S. champ Bill Goldberg pinned Konnan ... Bret Hart & Hollywood Hogan defeated Roddy Piper & Randy Savage ... Roddy Piper defeated Randy Savage.

LULA, MS
BY CHUCK MORRIS



JERRY LAWLER
VS.
TRACEY SMOTHERS



Lawler battled Smothers in a match in which the only way to win was to piledrive the other man. Early on, Smothers conferred with his manager, Brandon Baxter, outside the ring. This only delayed the beating he was to receive from Lawler once he stepped through the ropes. The momentum swung back and forth several times before Paul Diamond ran into the ring. With the referee knocked down, Diamond and Smothers brutalized Lawler, delivering a spike piledriver. As the referee regained consciousness, Smothers piledrived Lawler again, but this time the ref saw it and declared Tracey the winner.

OTHER BOUTS: Master B wrestled Kid Wikkid to a time-limit draw ... Billy Travis defeated Lance Jade ... Tony Falk & Brandon Baxter defeated Ashley Hudson & Jacquelyn ... B.J. Awesome & Paul Diamond defeated Mr. Wrestling (not the original) & Spellbinder in a Texas death match.



Matt Brock's **Plain Speaking**

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

Used to think Randy Hales had his head screwed on straight, but I'm not so sure anymore. Hales, for those who don't know, is the promoter of Memphis' Power Pro Wrestling, and he's been working in the Memphis area for as long as I can remember. So has Jerry Lawler, which is the point of this story. Hales is spending his

time promoting PPW and trying to rid the area of Jerry Lawler, which to anyone who doesn't know the whole story sounds like a contradiction. Lawler has been Memphis wrestling for the past 25 years, the man around whom all of Memphis wrestling has revolved, but now Hales is claiming that Lawler is no longer interested in Memphis or its fans. "That's crazy," Lawler responded. "I put more people in the seats around here than anybody. I built Memphis wrestling, and nobody is gonna run me out. Everybody knows I'm 'The King,' and I'm here to stay." Pretty hard to argue with Lawler, even after Hales

MEMPHIS, TN

anointed Paul Silva, the WWF's new giant, the new "King Of Memphis." Hales says Lawler is a terrible role model, but Lawler, of course, disagrees. "This goes back plenty of years, believe me," Lawler said. "But he can no more say I'm not 'The King' in wrestling than anyone can say Elvis isn't the king of Graceland." These days, Lawler spends a lot more time providing commentary on WWF TV than he does wrestling in Memphis, but it's impossible to question his impact on the area. Hales needs to follow one rule: If Lawler wants to be a part of Memphis wrestling, that should be okay with him.

Must have been some novelist who said June and July are the only decent times of year to be in Cleveland. They say this town has undergone a revitalization, but it still looks the same to me. Dusty old buildings. Cloudy skies. Thousands of people with desperate looks on their faces. They fixed up the area around the new baseball stadium and stuck in some of those newfangled beer restaurants, but anyone who wanders seven or eight blocks from the stadium sees not much has changed.

Fortunately for those of us who have to visit Cleveland every once in a while, Gund Arena, where they hold wrestling matches, is in the good part of town, and that's where Steve Austin came back from his loss the night before and regained the WWF World title from Kane. Big victory for Austin, and it shows he's a true champion. As Ric Flair once told me, when you're defending the title every night, or maybe every other night, you're bound to lose at some point. The test of a champion is how he recovers. There was a time for years and years when it seemed like Flair never lost a rematch for a world title, and it looks like Austin might be cut from the same mold. "Yeah, I was [angry],"

CLEVELAND, OH



LAWLER CONFRONTS HALES

Austin said. "Kane stole the belt from me at King of the Ring. But McMahon couldn't back down. He had to give me that rematch, and Bearer was so full of confidence that he let Kane get into it. Big mistake." McMahon, as most people know, doesn't want Austin to be WWF World champ, but that's his big mistake, too. Austin's a no-nonsense wrestler, a throwback, and he's good for the sport. Too bad McMahon can't figure that out.

ECW held a card here at the Elks Club the day before the Fourth of July, and it reminded me of the times when wrestling was held all the time at the old Sunnyside Gardens. Wonder how the Sunnyside crowd would have liked the ECW crew. Candido and Storm. The Blue Meanie. Sabu. All those damn Dudleys. Doesn't sound like a cigar-smoking crowd's type of federation, does it? The one thing that strikes me again and again about ECW is how violent it continues to be, and even though wrestling's a violent sport, the goal of a wrestling match is to pin your opponent, not injure him. What strikes me most about ECW, though, is that there doesn't seem to be a heckuva lot going on in the federation these days, at least once you get below the surface. Wouldn't mind seeing this Rob Van Dam and Sabu vs. Chris Candido and Lance Storm feud last for a while longer, though. Trouble is, I can't see Candido and Storm staying together much longer.

Bill Goldberg beat Hollywood Hogan for the WCW World title here tonight, and he must have had all 39,000-plus fans on his side. Not too hard to figure out which way the fans are going on this one. The Georgia Dome was a sea of T-shirt wearing, placard-holding Goldberg fans, and some of these crazies were actually begging



CANDIDO VS. VAN DAM

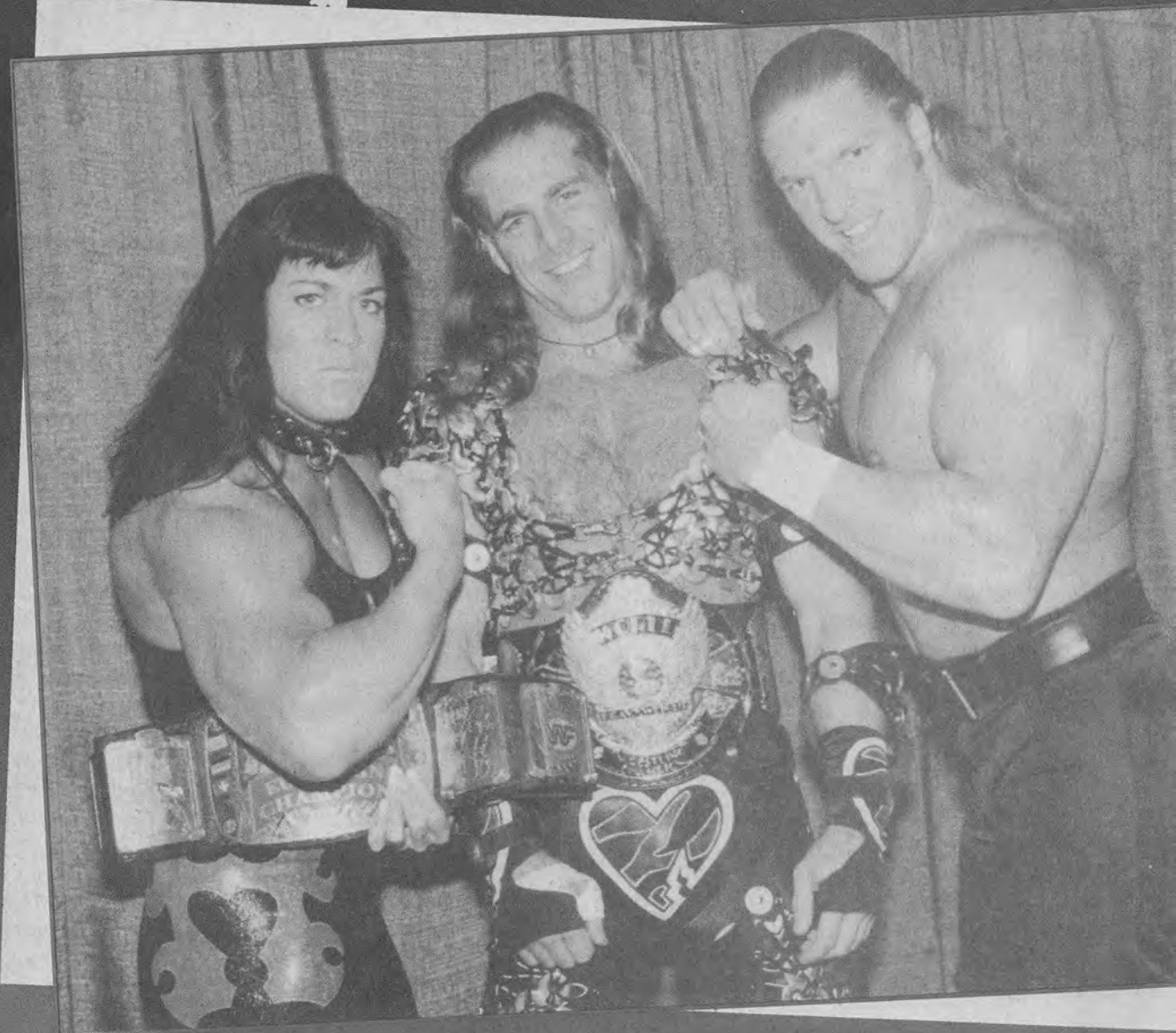
to be Goldberg's next victim. Hogan became another victim tonight, and what made that noteworthy wasn't the loss, because Hogan's been losing a lot of matches over the past few years, but how he lost. Can't remember too many times when Hogan didn't get the pin following his legdrop, but Goldberg kicked out and speared Hogan from here 'til next year. Then it was over, and Goldberg, who's been wrestling for less than a year, had the big gold belt. Impossible to say how long he'll hold on to it, but this much is true: The fans have found their hero, and it's easy to see why. Wrestling these days is packed with cartoon characters and gimmicks and cliques, but Goldberg doesn't

subscribe to any of those theories of attracting attention. He's a throwback to the 1950s, when wrestlers were wrestlers and—with the exception of Gorgeous George—all they had to do was get into the ring and fight like men. That's what Goldberg does. He fears nobody and fights like a man. He doesn't wear funny outfits or call himself funny things, and he doesn't have teammates running interference for him. He merely annihilates everybody that crosses his path. Wrestling, like most sports, tends to follow trends, and it would be fine with this reporter if Goldberg's trend was picked up by a few dozen wrestlers here and there. No nonsense. Just wrestling. Obviously, the fans like it. They're finally tired of the circus. □

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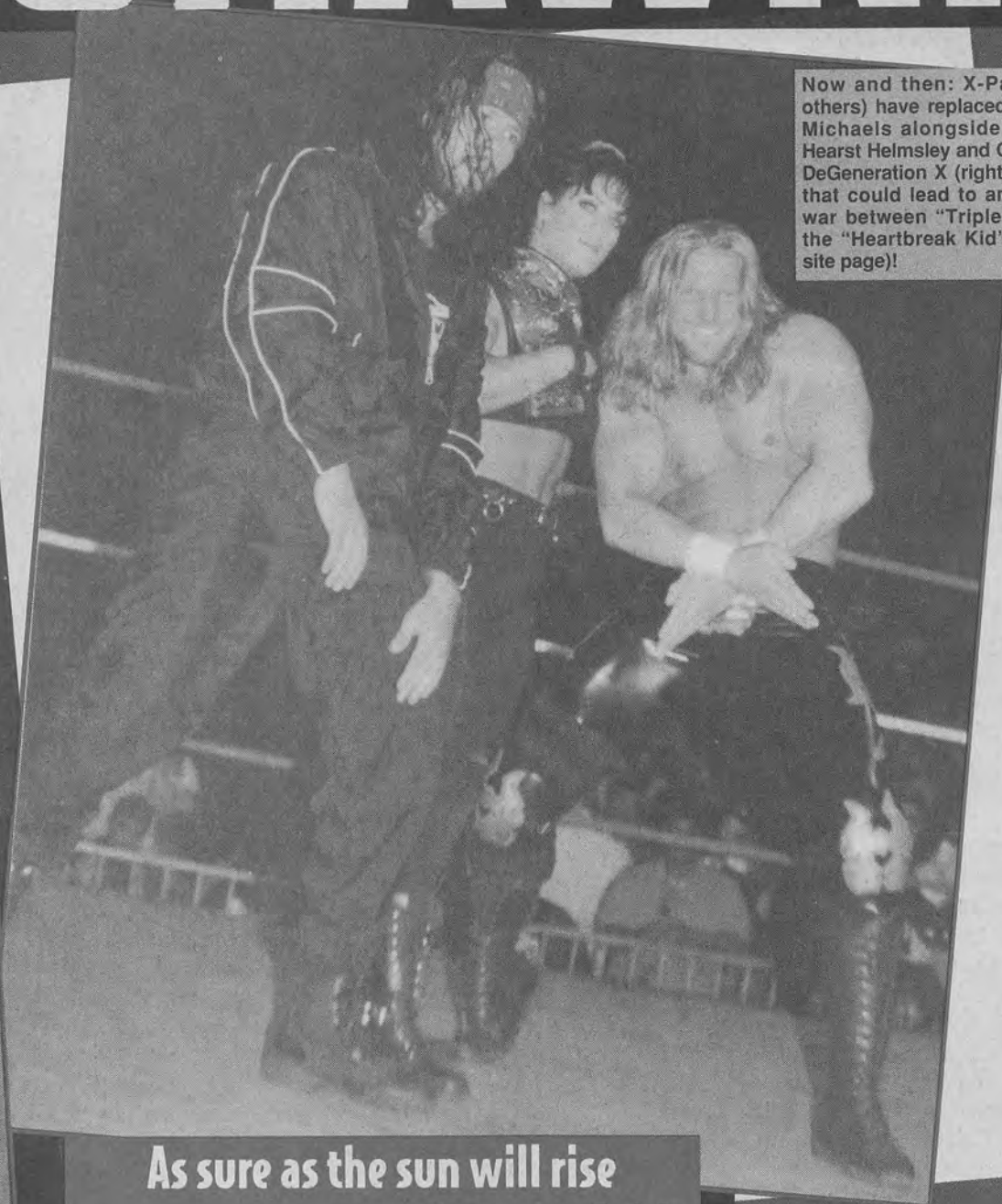
VS.

The Inevitable War Nobody Wants To Talk About



SHAWN

Now and then: X-Pac (and others) have replaced Shawn Michaels alongside Hunter Hearst Helmsley and Chyna in DeGeneration X (right) ... and that could lead to an all-out war between "Triple-H" and the "Heartbreak Kid" (opposite page)!



As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, you can be sure of this fact: If Shawn Michaels returns to the WWF, Hunter Hearst Helmsley will be his first target

By Dan Murphy

WHEN HUNTER HEARST Helmsley stepped into the ring and declared that Shawn Michaels had dropped the ball by losing the WWF World



DeGeneration X continues without Michaels, but not as strong: While Shawn's personality drew stars like Mike Tyson to his circle (left), Helmsley has trouble securing World title matches against Steve Austin (below).

title at WrestleMania, everyone who knew Michaels expected immediate fallout. Even with a severe back injury, Michaels isn't the type of person who lets insults slide, especially when they're coming from someone he had considered one of his closest allies.

Oddly, though, and perhaps for the first time in his career, Michaels, while back in the WWF picture, has remained silent in the face of criticism.

What was going through Shawn's mind when "Triple-H" recruited X-Pac and The New Age Outlaws into DeGeneration X?

What was going through Shawn's mind when "Triple-H" declared himself the new leader of the clique?

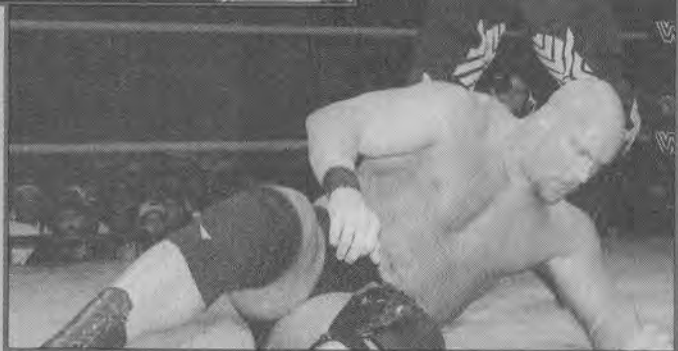
What was going through Shawn's mind when "Triple-H" received title shots—*Shawn's* shots—against Steve Austin?

After WrestleMania, Michaels went into seclusion as he rehabilitated his many injuries. And while he has appeared on WWF broadcasts of late, he is being guarded about his inner views of DX.

"Triple-H" better not misconstrue Michaels' seeming benevolence. He has definite feelings about what has transpired in DX since WrestleMania, even if he's not speaking about them at this point.

In many respects, Helmsley's version of DeGeneration X remains in the shadow of the original Hunter-Michaels-Chyna incarnation. Bringing X-Pac aboard upped the attitude of the organization, but diminished the group's in-ring presence. Road Dog and Billy Gunn have matured into respectable tag team champions, but the team has struggled against the likes of The Road Warriors and DOA.

Helmsley has slipped in the WWF ratings after dropping several matches to Austin. In recent



months, even Chyna has found herself humbled at the hands of Austin's "Stone-Cold stunner." Without Michaels, the group lacks that superstar presence. Deep down, Hunter realizes this.

"If you ask me, 'Triple-H' knows that he's not the wrestler, or the leader, Michaels was," said WWF manager Jim Cornette, who has been watching DeGeneration X closely since The New Age Outlaws joined the organization. "Hunter is recruiting all of these halfwits that he can order around so he can be ready when Michaels returns to action, because I guarantee: Michaels *is* going to come back, and he's not happy with Hunter's shenanigans."

Sources close to Helmsley confirm that Hunter had his eye on taking control of DeGeneration X from the beginning. When Michaels went down with a back injury, he saw his chance and he grabbed it with both hands.

Though Helmsley has not had the singles success of his illustrious counterpart, he has spent months training and teaming with Michaels. He knows everything there is to know about Michaels, from how Shawn would prepare for the match to where he would go at the end of the night. "Triple-H" has been preparing for this battle since the day he met Michaels. Now that Michaels has suffered an injury and is busy accumulating ring rust,



An all-out war between "Triple-H" and Michaels would be, in the words of Jim Ross, "an outright slobberknocker!"

feud. And though it's unlikely, remember this: Shawn's looks have set even the most hardened female heart aflutter; how would "Triple-H" respond if Michaels were to lure Chyna away from him?

"If Hunter and Michaels were to clash, it would be an outright slobberknocker," Jim Ross speculated. "Michaels is possibly the most athletic champion the WWF has ever seen. 'Triple-H' is hungry to knock him off. Depending on who

Helmsley is riding a tidal wave of confidence.

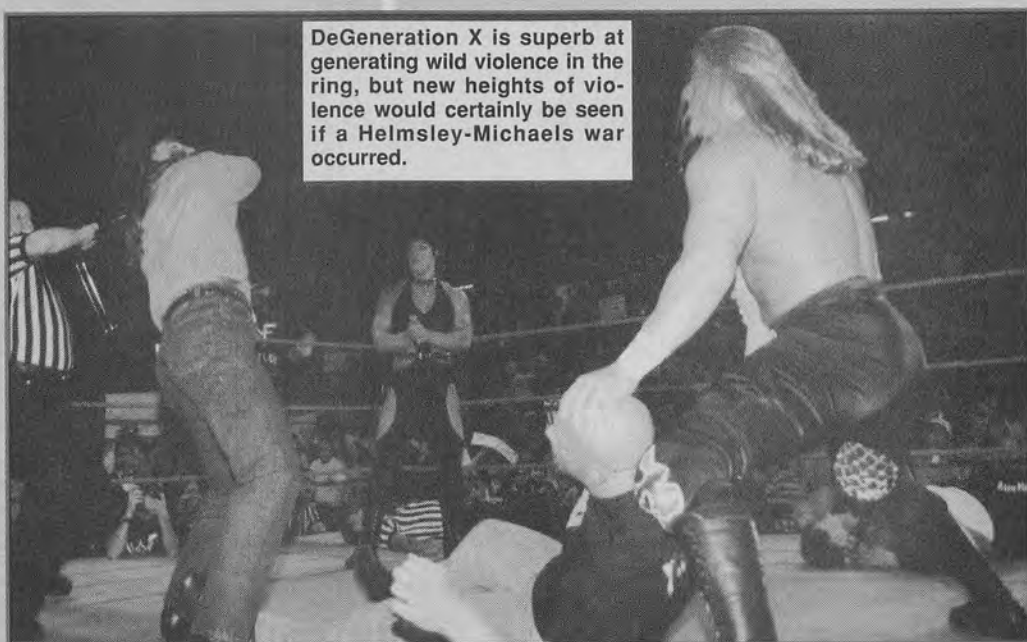
"Why do you want to talk about Shawn Michaels, an ex-champion, when you've got a real live champion right here in front of you?" Helmsley beamed. "Stop living in the past, buddy. If you want to talk to someone about how it feels to be booted out of the greatest collection of champions in wrestling history, give Shawn a call. Maybe when he stops sulking, he'll actually comment."

Despite Helmsley's bravado, he'd do well to watch his back. X-Pac had forged a solid friendship with Michaels over the years; if Michaels were to return to action, there is a possibility that X-Pac may be tempted to join him in a war against Helmsley. Now that The New Age Outlaws are becoming a stronger tandem, they may be tempted to bail out of DeGeneration X rather than get involved in a Shawn-Hunter

sides with whom, this could be a feud for the ages."

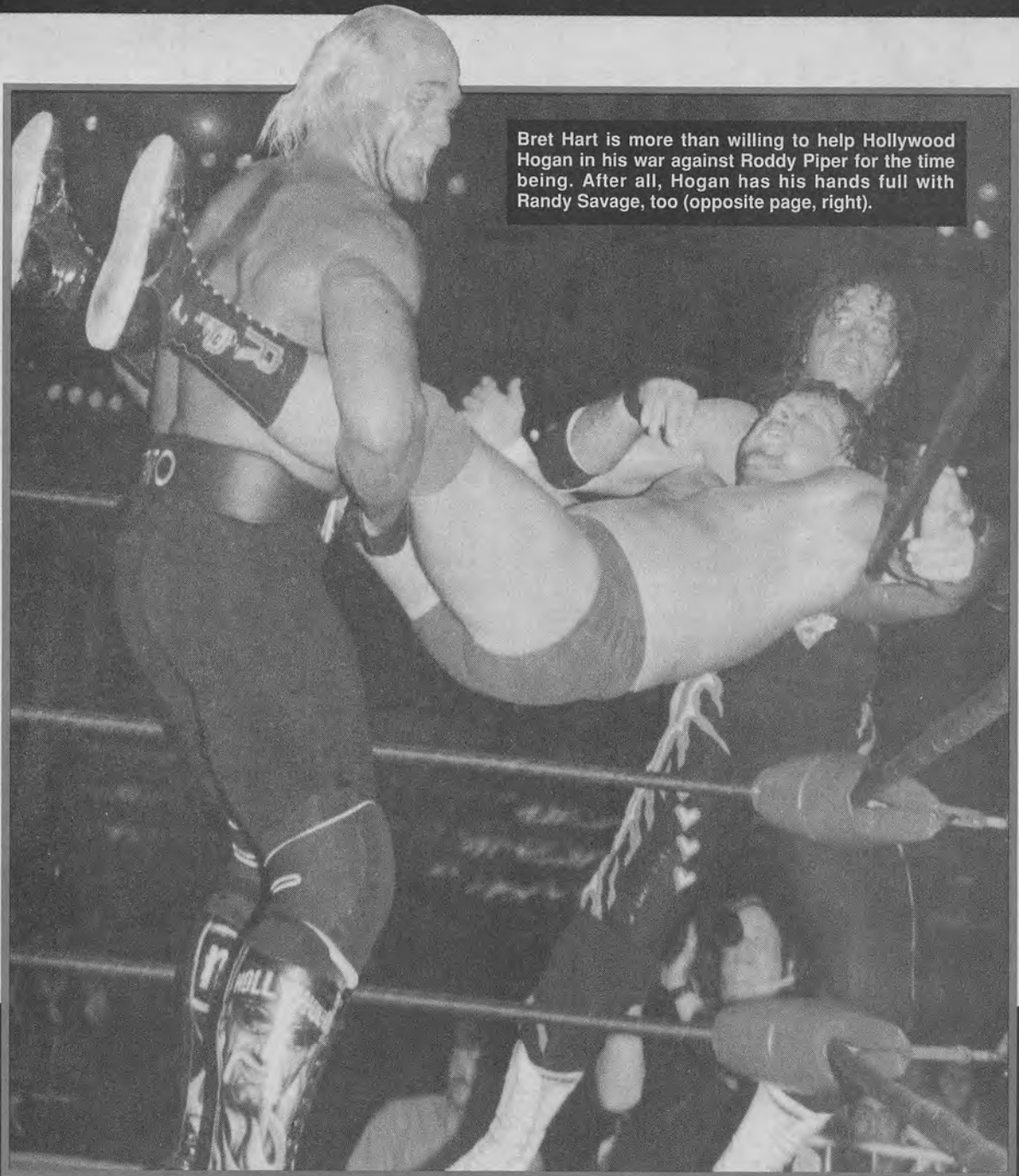
Right now, though, the battlefield begins and ends with the imagination. It remains uncertain as to when Michaels can return to the ring. If he does, it's a bigger mystery as to what condition he will be in. DeGeneration X, meanwhile, has its hands full with the Nation of Domination.

Now is the calm before the storm ... but there are some very dark clouds hanging low on the WWF horizon. □



DeGeneration X is superb at generating wild violence in the ring, but new heights of violence would certainly be seen if a Helmsley-Michaels war occurred.

BRET HART'S STARTLING REVELATION:



Bret Hart is more than willing to help Hollywood Hogan in his war against Roddy Piper for the time being. After all, Hogan has his hands full with Randy Savage, too (opposite page, right).

Photos by Bill Apter

"Hollywood Hogan's Obsessions Will Be His Downfall"

By Andy Rodriguez

LIFE IN THE NWO, Bret Hart tells himself, was never supposed to be easy. He says he knew that going in. He says his decision to ally himself with the black and white faction of the renegade organization came only after a lot of thinking and rethinking and soul-searching.

"It's hard," said Hart. "For a while, you wonder if you made the right choice. But you know what? I did. I'm ready to live with my choice. I'll stick it out and face the consequences."

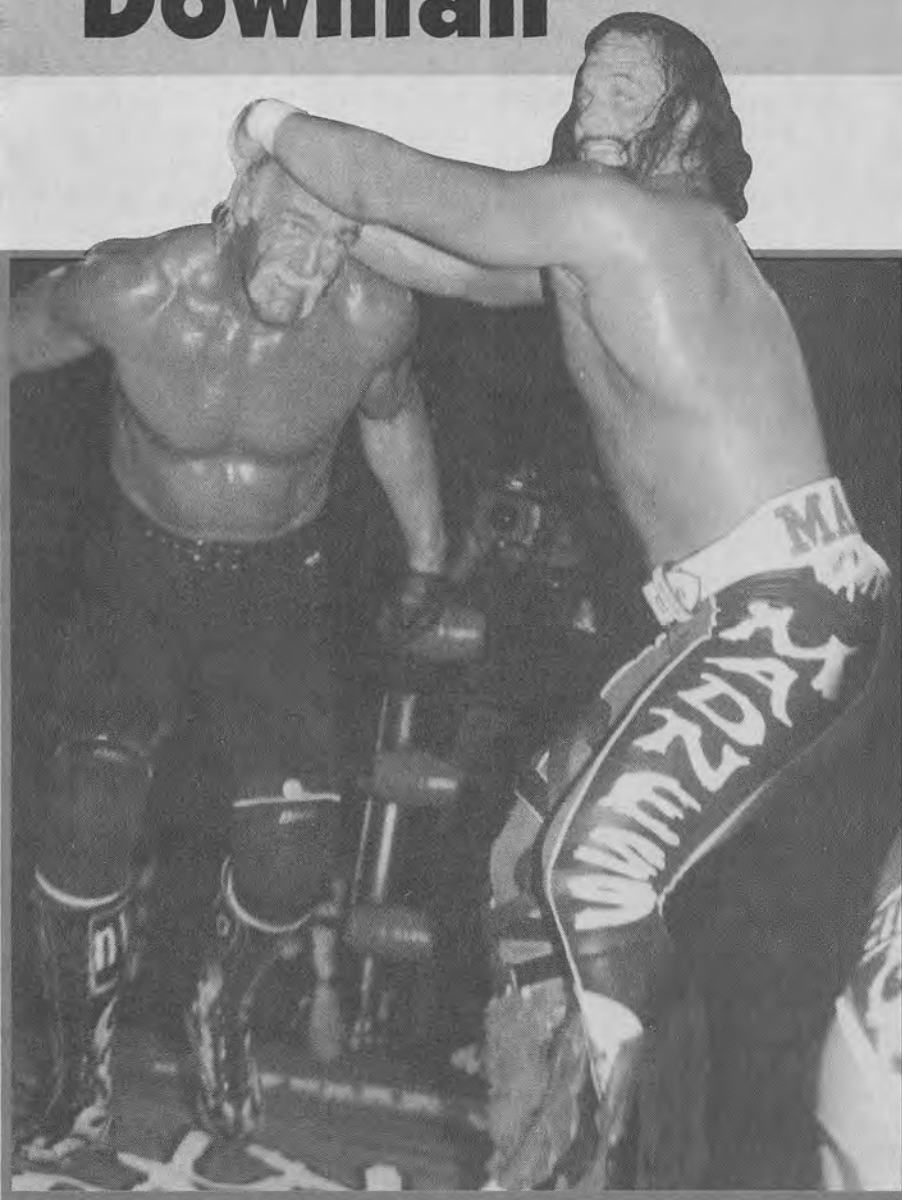
For Hart, the words are there, and the words ring true. He is ultimately a man of his word. Ask anyone who has ever teamed with him. Ask anyone who has ever hated his guts.

Still, it's a struggle. Lately he has been seeing things he doesn't like. Usually when that happens, he'll just deal with them. This time, though, he thinks he might be powerless.

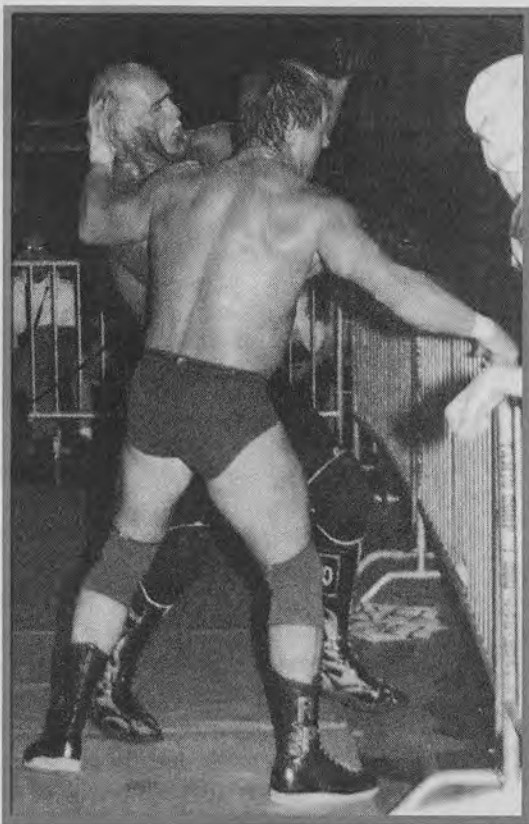
Powerless against perhaps the most powerful man in wrestling.

As the unquestioned leader of NWO Hollywood, Hulk Hogan pretty much does what he wants. He has a lot of respect for his comrades in the black and white, but if any one of them dares to question his authority, that man had better start looking for a new gang with which to hang out.

So if Hogan says it's his mission to destroy Roddy Piper, then that, by extension, becomes NWO Hollywood's mission. If he's determined to break Randy Savage's



While Bret Hart's alliance with Hollywood Hogan remains solid, the "Hitman" thinks Hogan spends way too much time and energy plotting to destroy two of his biggest enemies—and might soon end up destroying himself!



The war between Piper and Hogan has been going on for years—and it might finally destroy Hollywood very soon.

leg, then everybody else should be equally determined, or at least say they are.

For Hart, this is a problem. A big one.

"Look," he said, "I hate Piper and Savage as much as Hollywood does. Piper's a washed-up has-been, and he deserves to get his mouth shut for good. Savage, he crossed the line when he joined The Wolfpac. As far as he's concerned, the gloves are off. I don't care how bad his leg is hurt. We'll make it worse.

"So going after them," Hart continued, "that's no problem. But Piper and Savage aren't the be-all and end-all. There's the rest of The Wolfpac. There's the whole damn WCW! Hollywood has to realize there's plenty of other business out there."

As usual, Hart has backed up his words. At Slamboree, he scored a disqualification victory over the "Macho Man." At The Great American Bash, he was there for Hogan as they defeated Piper and Savage; it was Hart who

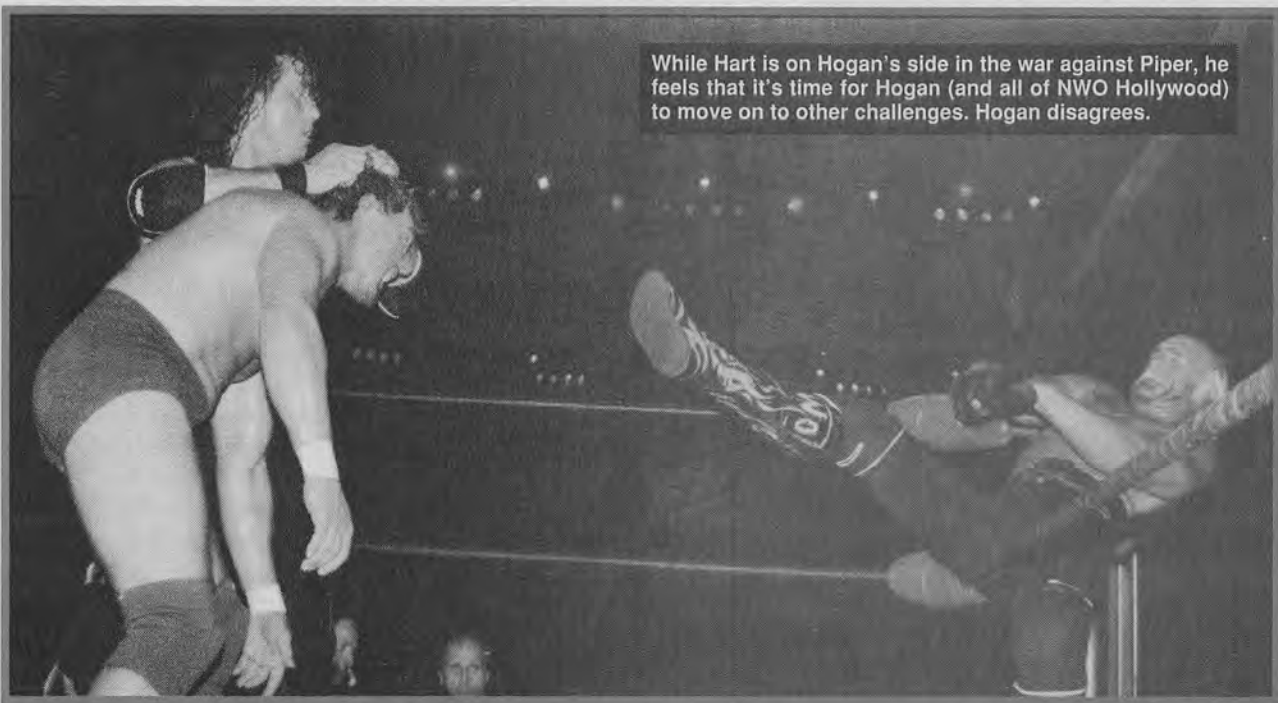
forced Savage to submit to the "sharpshooter."

Clearly, he shares Hogan's commitment to making Piper and Savage look bad. The difference? Hart says it's time to move on; Hogan isn't sure.

"Brother, Bret Hart's been a great partner and a great NWO-ite," he said. "The man is without a doubt one of the best in the business. But he doesn't have the long view like I have to have. Dealing with Piper and Savage is all part of the plan. Bret's part of the plan, too. Someday he'll see it clearly and he won't have any doubts that Hollywood is doing the right thing."

Nevertheless, Hart has his doubts. He isn't the only one. A lot of smart people are saying that Hogan's so-called plan is nothing more than a plan to fulfill his own goals.

"Man, I've seen the look in Hogan's eyes when he's in there with Piper and Savage," said Dallas Page. "The man is an absolute maniac, like the only thing that matters in the world is taking them out for good! Is it personal for him? You better believe it."



While Hart is on Hogan's side in the war against Piper, he feels that it's time for Hogan (and all of NWO Hollywood) to move on to other challenges. Hogan disagrees.

"I can't say I blame Hogan for what he's doing," said WCW Executive Committee Chairman J.J. Dillon. "Look at the history between him and Piper, between him and Savage. There's a lot of bad blood there. It's obvious Hogan still isn't finished dealing with it."

Hart hears what the critics are saying, and it reinforces his belief that Hogan is paying too much attention to men he has fought for much too long.

"I can understand what Hollywood's going through," Hart said. "I've had my share of long-running feuds with guys in this sport. But I knew when to pull back. I knew when it was time to move on to other challenges. I've seen a lot of guys get consumed with their opponents. They lose their perspective. They forget what it's all about."

"You know," Hart added quietly, "I think Hollywood Hogan's obsessions will be his downfall. I really do, and I don't want to see it happen. He's already leaving himself open to a lot of other dangers. I mean, I'm watching his back, and

so is the rest of the real NWO, but there is only so much we can do."

Is Hart giving up? Maybe. But maybe he has something else in mind.

"Know the old saying? If you can't beat 'em, join 'em?" said one WCW competitor. "Well, it sounds to me like Hart's ready to reverse that. Sounds like he's sick of holding the bag for Hollywood. I'm not one to predict, but I think Hogan needs to keep a close eye on Bret Hart."

Considering everything that's going on in wrestling these days, it would be no surprise if Hart were to turn against Hogan. Hart prides himself on his individuality. His alliance with Hogan was formed not out of loyalty to one of the sport's legends, but to further his own career.



Hogan has been contending with the brutality of the "Macho Man" for a long time—but will he soon have the "Hitman" as an enemy, too?

Hart admits as much, but he's not ready to admit he'd consider leaving NWO Hollywood.

"As of right now," he said, "I have no doubt that NWO Hollywood is the place to be. I still have more options and choices here than I'd have in WCW, and definitely more than in The Wolfpac. I'll be with Hollywood for a long time."

In this sport, though, we know "a long time" can mean two days. Alliances shift quickly, and with very serious consequences. What Hart has done is give Hogan a warning. Hogan can heed it. He can step back and take a second look at his feuds with Piper and Savage.

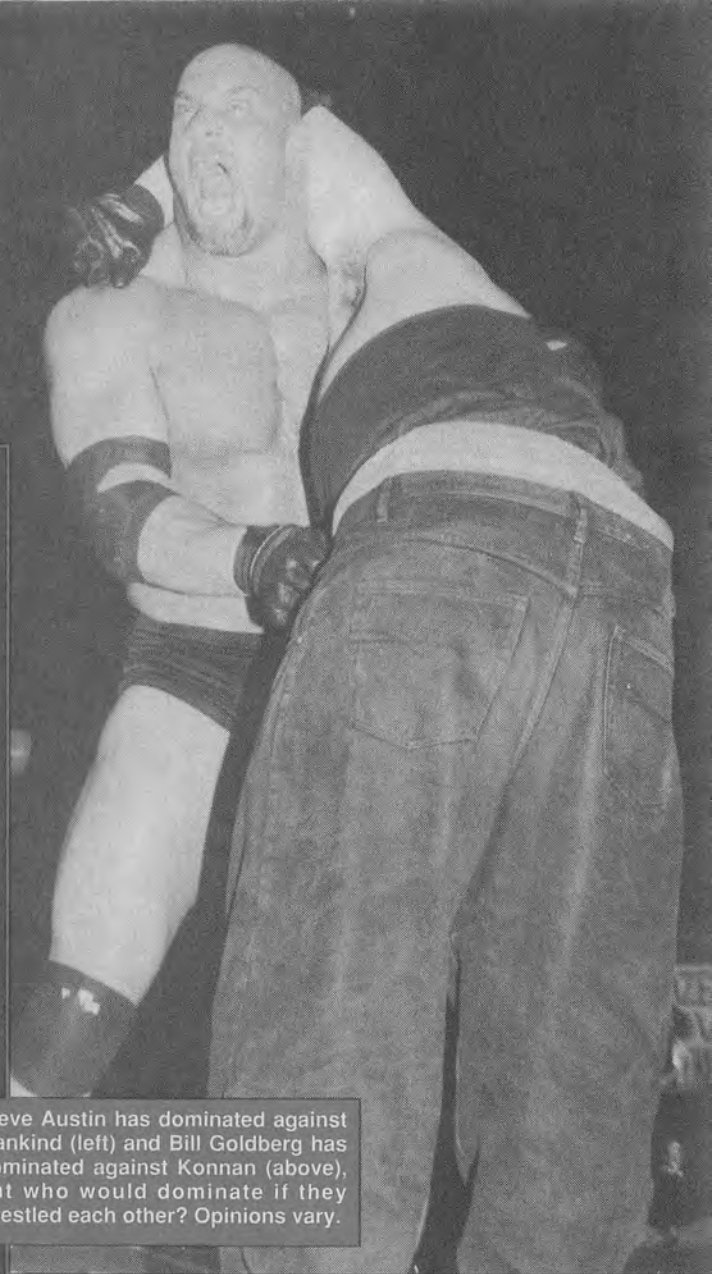
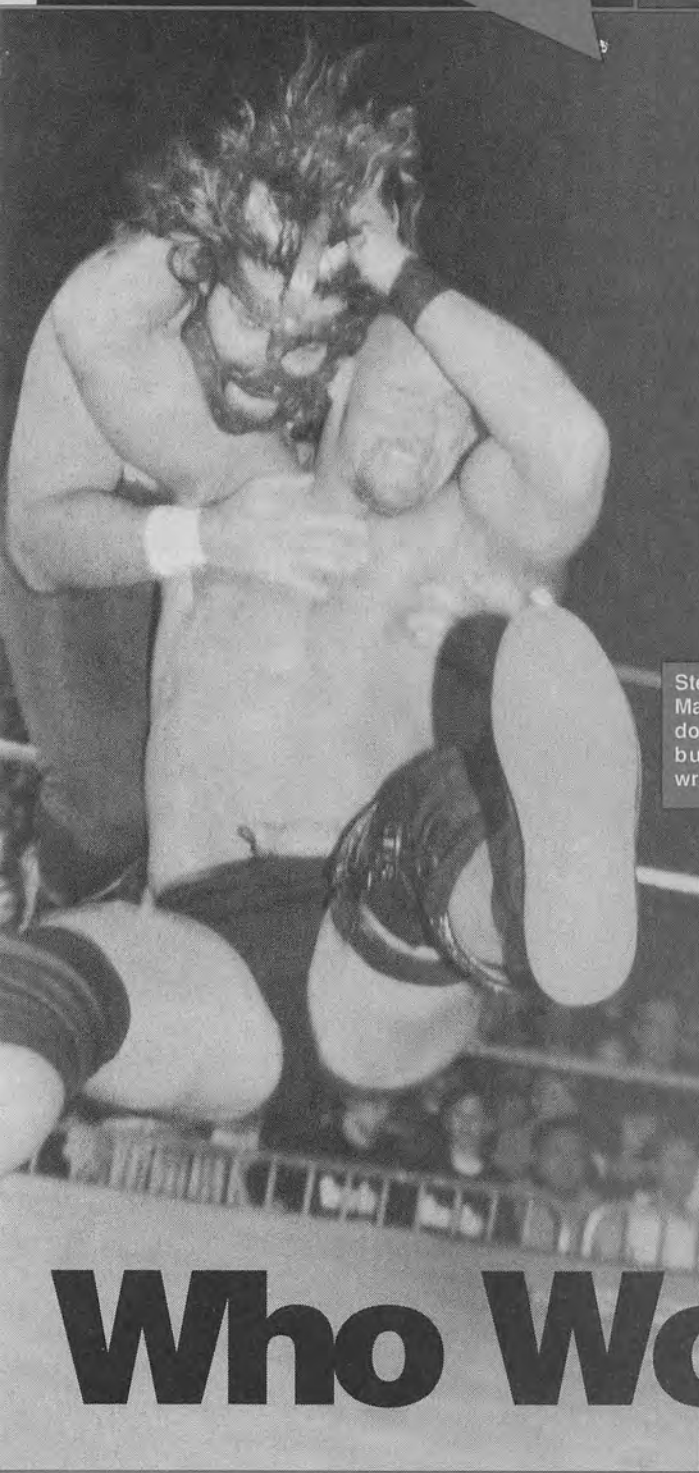
However, if Hogan is obsessed with the "Macho Man" and the "Rowdy One"—and indications are that he certainly is—he might not be able to pull back. He might very well be locked on a course that leads to his own destruction.

With Hart doing the destroying. □



Hart argues that after a decade and a half, the Hogan-Piper wars should come to an end. They might soon—if Hart has anything to say about it!

**EXPERT
ANALYSIS:**



Steve Austin has dominated against Mankind (left) and Bill Goldberg has dominated against Konnan (above), but who would dominate if they wrestled each other? Opinions vary.

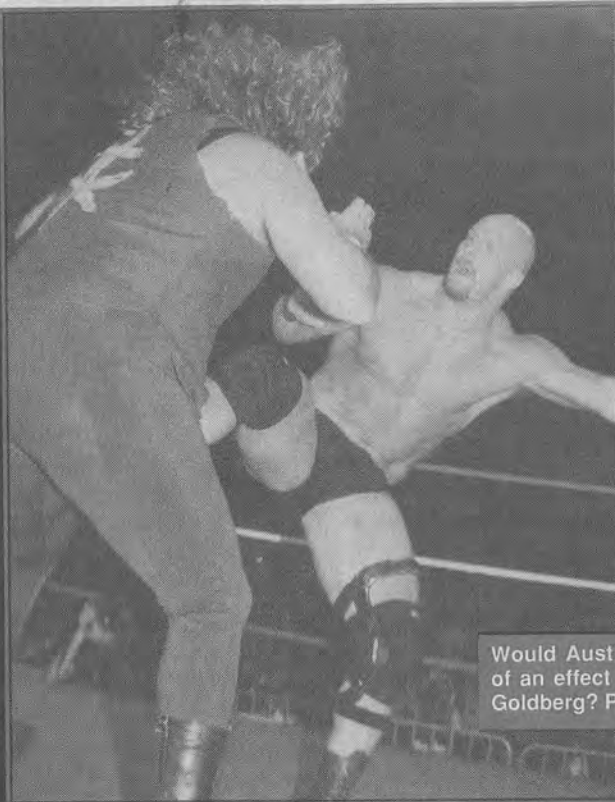
**AUSTIN vs.
GOLDBERG!**

Who Would Win

Steve Austin and Bill Goldberg have redefined wrestling in the 1990s.

What would happen if these two colossal figures actually met in the ring?

We give our opinions ... see how they match up with yours!



Would Austin's kicks have much of an effect against the muscular Goldberg? Probably not.

THEY ARE THE two hottest wrestlers in the world today. The mere thought of a match between WWF World champion Steve Austin and WCW World champion Bill Goldberg boggles the mind. The two men have so much in common, it's almost impossible to choose a winner.

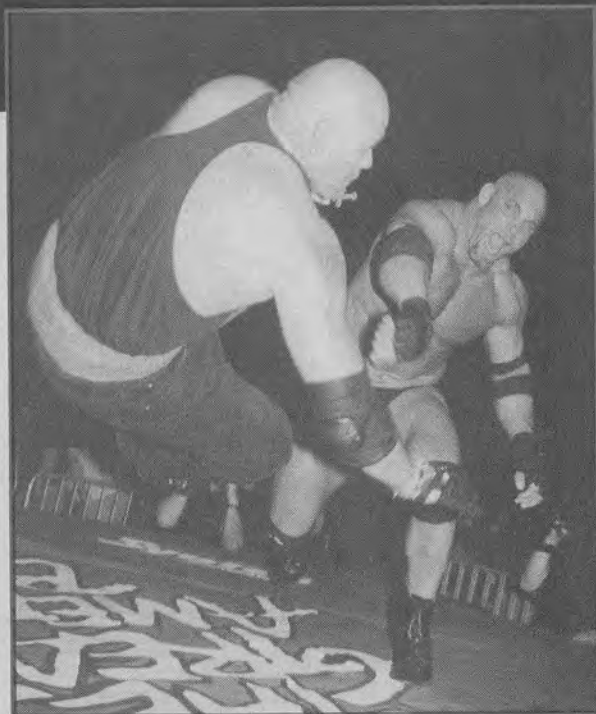
Even their physical appearances are the same. Austin: bald head, goatee, black trunks, black boots, and a gold belt. Goldberg: bald head, goatee, black trunks, black boots, and a gold belt.

One comes from the WWF, the other from WCW. Austin hasn't suffered a clean loss since March 1997. Goldberg hasn't suffered a loss since his debut in September

1997. Austin reached the pinnacle of his career by defeating Shawn Michaels for the WWF World title in March 1998. Goldberg reached the pinnacle of his career by trouncing Hulk Hogan for the WCW World title belt in July 1998.

And both men have triumphed over great adversity.

Since beginning his career in 1989, Austin has been sidelined several times with a bad left knee. Thanks to Owen Hart's piledriver, spinal shock syndrome almost ended his



Could Goldberg's power overcome Austin's significant experience? Not necessarily.

... And Why

career last year. Injuries have derailed Austin every time he has gained momentum—until now.

Goldberg's football career with the Los Angeles Rams and Atlanta Falcons was plagued by physical ailments. Mononucleosis, a torn hamstring, and a ripped abdominal muscle combined to drive the mighty Goldberg from the NFL. His first months in WCW were hampered by several nagging injuries. But, like Austin, Goldberg rose like a phoenix from the ashes as soon as his body healed.

Austin has reached the top of the WWF and has defeated every serious contender. Goldberg has more than 100 victories—without a single defeat.

If Austin and Goldberg ever collide, who would survive? Editors and writers of *INSIDE WRESTLING* offer their in-depth analyses of the titanic struggle that would ensue.

STU SAKS: "In a match between Austin and Goldberg, I would give the nod to Goldberg. First, Goldberg outweighs Austin by almost 20 pounds and stands an inch taller. That makes it tougher for Austin to hit Goldberg with the 'Stone-Cold stunner.'

"Second, Austin leans toward a brawling style these days. I can just imagine Austin stomping Goldberg in the corner, Goldberg shaking off the blows, then knocking the wind out of Austin with his 'spear.'

"Third, Goldberg's singular purpose is to win. He's very good-natured out of the ring and doesn't waste his emotions on petty feuds. Since Austin's drive is fueled solely by anger, I think he suffers from a lack of focus."

DAVE LENKER: "As of now, I'm quite sure Austin could beat

Goldberg. Austin has pushed most of the sport's top stars to the limit over the years. Ric Flair, Rick Steamboat, Bret Hart, and Shawn Michaels have all had their hands full with Austin. The key here, though, is that *Austin* has also been pushed to the limit by these men. So we know how Austin reacts to adversity.

"Goldberg, while holding victories over men like Hollywood Hogan, Scott Hall, and Scott Norton, hasn't really been pushed. Of course, that might just be the best indicator of just how good Goldberg is, but I can't see a situation where Austin wouldn't have him in severe difficulty at some point. Goldberg might surpass Austin in the future, but, as of today, Austin's nine years of experience would amount to too much for Goldberg to overcome."

BILL APTER: "Boy, this is a tough one. Just the thought of Austin and Goldberg locked in a staredown is enough to run chills down my spine. In terms of style, both men prefer brawling throughout the course of a match, but their finishing maneuvers—as well as their setup moves—are truly spectacular.

"Can I picture Goldberg surviving the 'stunner'? Yes, especially if the match is less than 10 minutes old. Do I think Austin could withstand the 'spear,' then a well-executed 'jackhammer'? No, but I think 'Stone-Cold' would avoid those moves at all cost. I think Austin would use a solid strategy of mat wrestling to take advantage of Goldberg's inexperience. The 'stunner' would probably be non-existent, but Austin would get the win."

FRANK KREWDA: "I've watched countless matches involving Austin and Goldberg, and I think the best way to choose a winner is to look at how they wrestle their current competition. Goldberg has routinely mauled



"Stone Cold" might be able to put the freeze on Mankind, but he would have to curb his attitude and rely on his skills to overcome Goldberg's strength.

everyone thrown his way, from Scott Norton to Sting to Hollywood Hogan. In fact, he defeated Sting in the same amount of time it took him to defeat Jerry Flynn.

"Scientific skill and ring experience don't matter against Goldberg. There isn't one headlock, leglock, or toe-hold that could save Austin from a 270-pound charging bull."

ANALYSIS BY NUMBERS

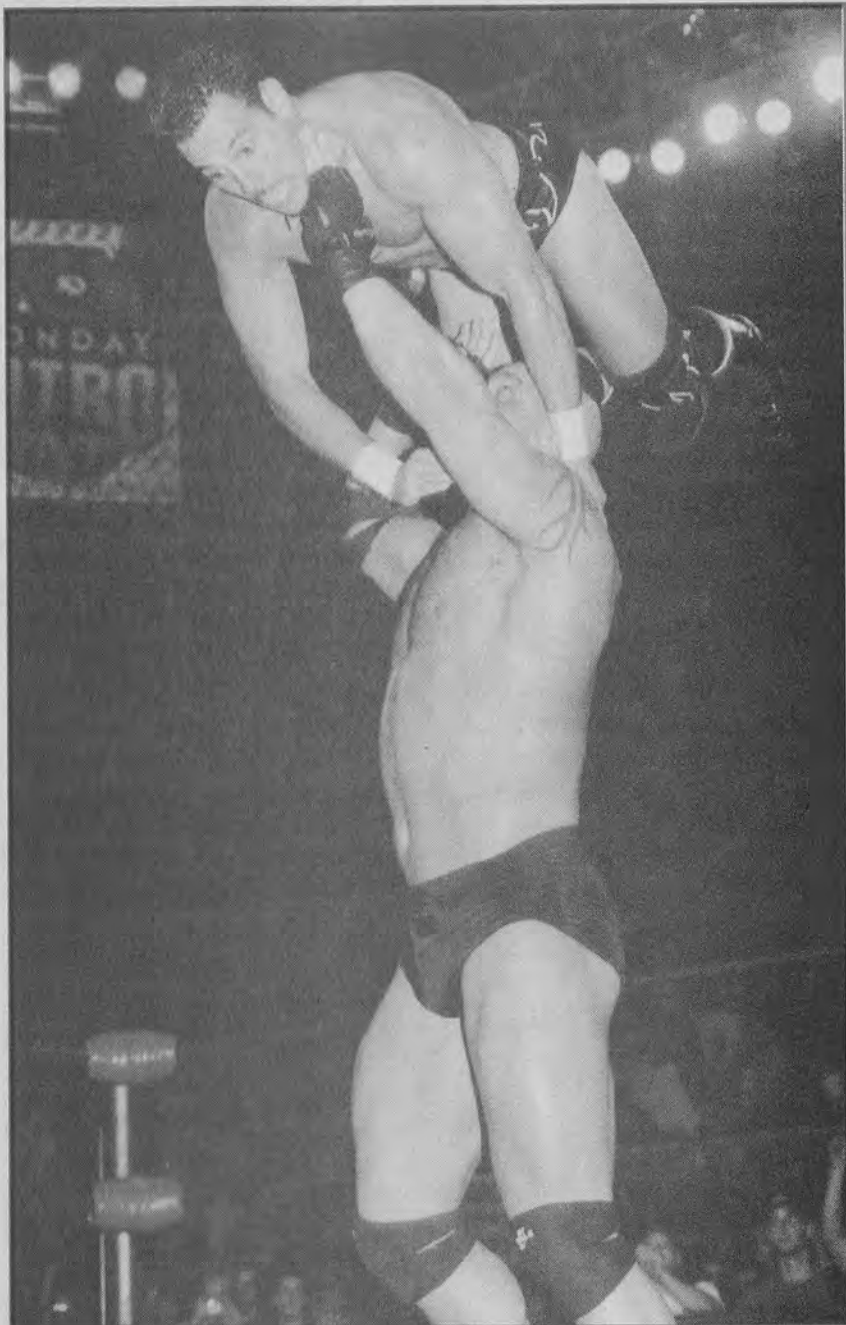
Our panel of prognosticators scored Steve Austin and Bill Goldberg in several categories, rating each wrestler's performance on a scale from 1 to 10. A rating of 50 indicates a perfect score. Based on this chart, it doesn't appear that "Stone Cold" would be next.

STEVE AUSTIN

EXPERIENCE:	50
SCIENCE:	40
AERIAL ABILITY:	30
PHYSIQUE:	36
POWER:	36
SPEED:	28
STAMINA:	46
TOUGHNESS:	50
INTIMIDATION:	47
POTENTIAL:	42
TOTAL:	405

BILL GOLDBERG

EXPERIENCE:	30
SCIENCE:	21
AERIAL ABILITY:	20
PHYSIQUE:	50
POWER:	50
SPEED:	29
STAMINA:	36
TOUGHNESS:	50
INTIMIDATION:	50
POTENTIAL:	50
TOTAL:	386



Austin wouldn't like the view from above any more than Chavo Guerrero Jr. does, so keeping the match on the mat against Goldberg would likely be his best strategy.

HARRY BURKETT: "I have a lot of respect for Goldberg, but I haven't caught 'Who's Next?' fever quite yet. His list of victims is impressive on paper, but you have to remember the circumstances involved in each of his biggest victories: Sting was still woozy from his attack by The Flock, Scott Hall was making his comeback after a lengthy absence, and Hollywood Hogan is considerably past his prime.

"When Steve Austin regained the WWF World title on June 29 by defeating Kane, 'Stone-Cold' proved he could handle *any* big man. Not only did he execute a stunner on Kane, but he used one on The Undertaker as well. Kane is 6'7" and The Undertaker is 6'9". Goldberg is only 6'3". I think Austin could 'stun' Goldberg in less than 10 minutes—long enough to make the three-count at least." □

IS STEVIE RAY TRYING TO SABOTAGE BOOKER T'S CAREER?

Photos by Bill Apter & Brad McFarlin

When his brother and tag team partner was sidelined by an illness, Booker T was forced to go solo. Rather than struggle, he thrived—and won five WCW TV titles. Now some say Stevie Ray wants Booker's star to crash and burn



By Steve Anderson

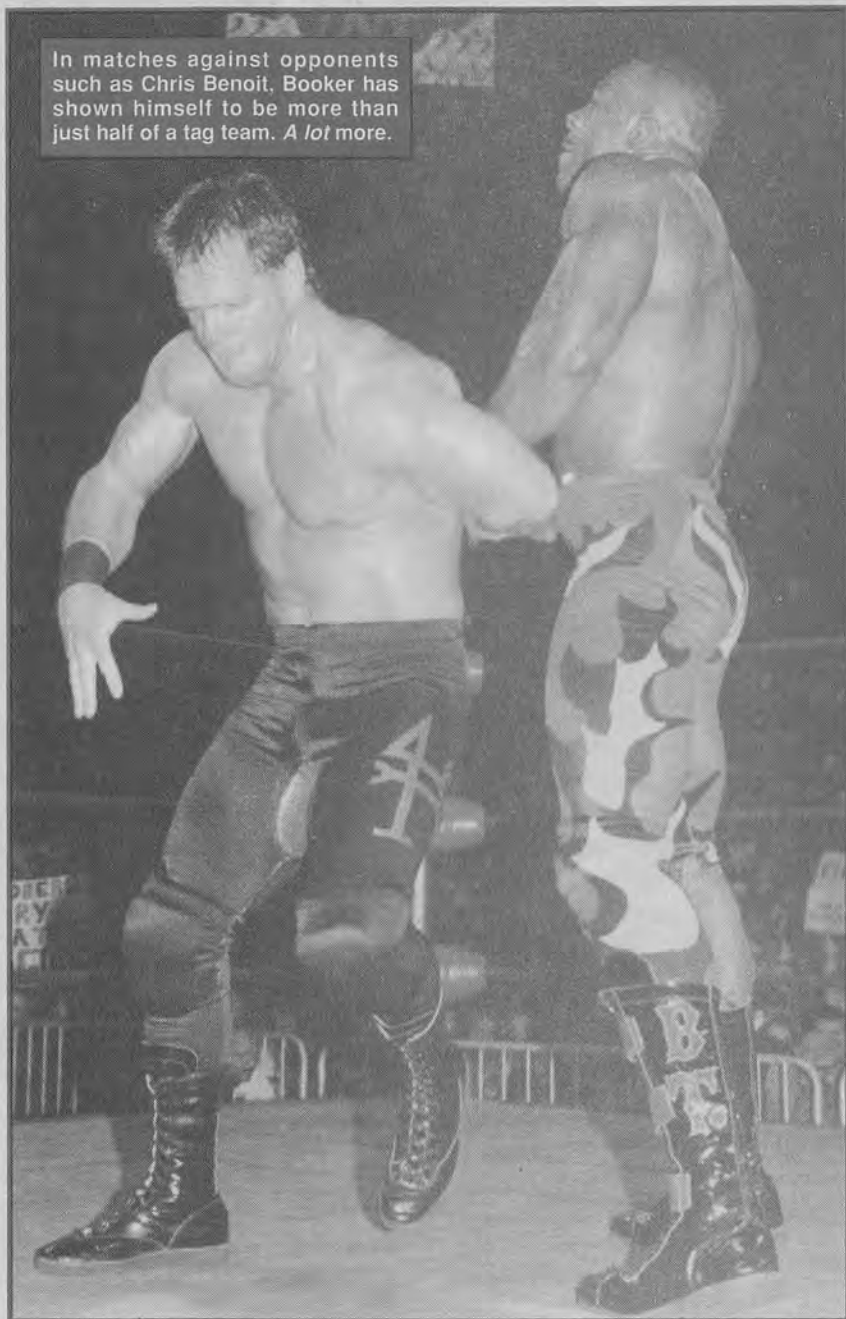
THE BIBLICAL TALE of Cain vs. Abel has been played out all too often in the world of professional wrestling. Hart has battled Hart. Gilbert has battled Gilbert. Rotten has battled Rotten. Steiner has battled Steiner.

Now two brothers who have formed a seven-time championship tag team appear to be headed down the same road. In fact, one of the brothers seems to be trying to hurt the other without him even knowing about it. It is the saga of Harlem Heat.

Stevie Ray was actually encouraging his brother to pursue a singles career at the end of 1997. He knew that Booker T had to carry on while he was out. Harlem Heat, he reasoned, could continue as a singles unit—temporarily. But there

Stevie Ray joins Booker T on a post-victory stroll back to the dressing room. Most people feel, though, that Stevie wants Booker to forget about his solo success in favor of Harlem Heat.

In matches against opponents such as Chris Benoit, Booker has shown himself to be more than just half of a tag team. *A lot more.*



were conditions and expectations that Stevie imposed on his brother.

"I wanted him to continue in the tradition that Harlem Heat established," recalled Stevie Ray. "That means kickin' butt like we did in Harlem, and not worryin' about fans, rules, or any other wrestlers. It means doin' whatever you have to do to survive and win."

According to most experts, Booker T has lived up to that Harlem Heat tradition—and then some. His transition from tag team champion to singles superstar has been one of the more fascinating

stories of the year so far. While the NWO splintered in its war with WCW, Booker T became one of the most consistent singles wrestlers in WCW. At press time, he was in the middle of his fifth reign as TV champion.

One would think that Stevie Ray would be ecstatic, but that's far from the case. Instead, he is critical, with an attitude bordering on resentment and jealousy.

"I've told my brother over and over again that he's lost his edge," said Stevie Ray. "Sure he's had success, but it's cost him his very soul."



Booker has been able to fight back against adversity both in individual matches and in his career as a whole. But will his brother allow him to continue the fight?

ed these past few months."

In other words, when Stevie Ray is around, Booker T acts like just another wrestler. The poise and posturing take a backseat, as does Booker T himself

now that Stevie Ray is back to active competition. Stevie wants things the way they used to be. He wants Harlem Heat to continue where they left off last year.

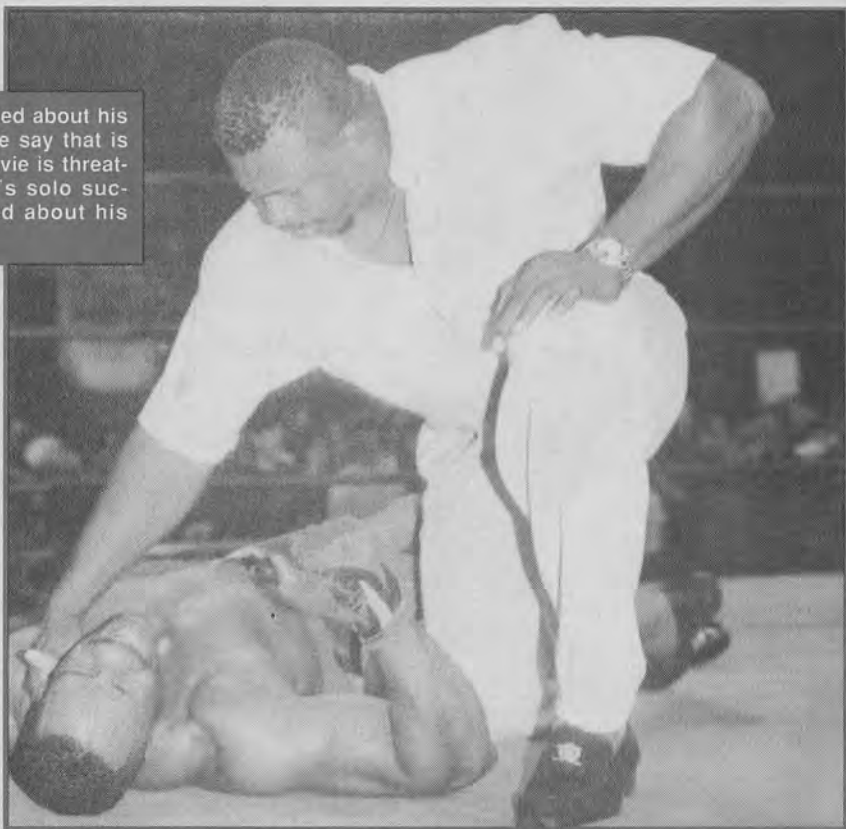
Perhaps Stevie Ray knows precisely what he's doing. Perhaps he sees the improvement in Booker and senses that as he becomes more and more successful, he'll want less and less to do with his brother. Perhaps he worries that should *he* have to wrestle on his own full-time, he won't have the kind of success Booker has enjoyed. If he can quietly chip away at Booker's confidence and keep him in a subservient role, maybe, just maybe, Booker will begin to believe that he's better off sticking with tag teams.

Booker ain't the man he used to be. He's sidling up to all these other WCW losers like Chris Benoit, and I don't like it one bit. He forgot who he is and where he came from."

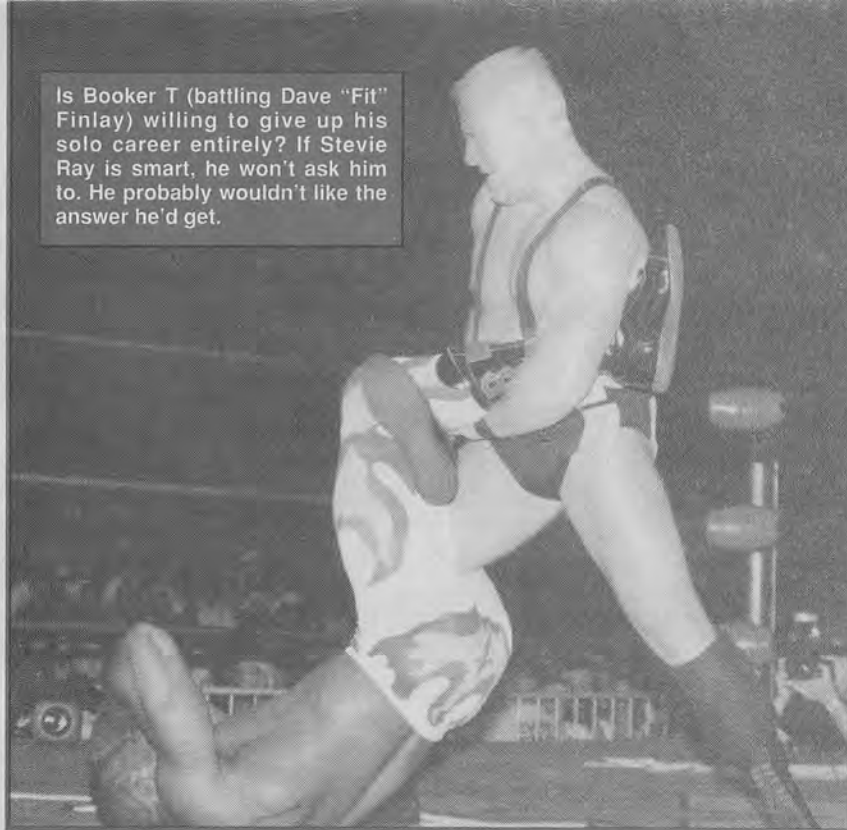
Stevie is concerned about his brother, but some say that is only because Stevie is threatened by Booker's solo success and worried about his own future.

Perhaps. But it can also be argued that the only time Booker T loses his edge is when he is in the company of his older brother. Stevie Ray has always been the more outspoken of the two, as he continues to serve as the unofficial leader of the tandem. Stevie keeps his brother in check, and Booker T's confidence drops dramatically when Stevie is around.

"Stevie does almost all the talking and strategizing in the locker room," said a WCW wrestler requesting anonymity. "Booker usually just stands there and nods, looking at the floor. It's like he's not the same person whose career has skyrocket-



Is Booker T (battling Dave "Fit" Finlay) willing to give up his solo career entirely? If Stevie Ray is smart, he won't ask him to. He probably wouldn't like the answer he'd get.



of a brother with a very strong personality. Stevie Ray's absence allowed Booker T to grow as a wrestler and as a person.

There's no reason why that growth should not continue. Many wrestlers are able to function as both singles and tag team superstars, but the success of that duality depends on the partner and how much he is willing to let go. For Booker T's sake, and for the sake of Harlem Heat, Stevie Ray should allow his brother to progress, not regress. That would show that he has grown as well.

A brotherly relationship has the chance to mature instead of self-destructing amidst allegations of betrayal and jealousy. But sadly, wrestling fans might be treated to more of the same.

Cain might have to battle Abel once again. □

Remember, during his convalescence, Stevie Ray witnessed the Steiners' breakup, and that may have opened up a floodgate of fear. That plus watching his brother win TV title after TV title could hardly have helped his state of mind.

"Hey, I'm happy my brother finally got his due in WCW," said Stevie Ray. "But now I'm back, so there's no reason for him to take all these singles matches all the time. He can still defend that TV belt, but Harlem Heat, seven-time World tag team champs, is back, and ain't nobody gonna stop us now."

"I owe a lot to my brother, and I'll never be able to repay that debt," added Booker T. "He's part of my success whether he's been here or not. We were side by side for so long that I never thought I'd ever get used to not having him there. Having him back now is an inspiration, but he's also got to realize that things have changed just a little."

As Booker T uttered those words, he pointed to the WCW TV belt lying next to him. The belt is an important symbol to him, a representation of his ability to emerge from the large and looming shadow



What would happen if Booker T unleashed his formidable skills against Stevie Ray instead of Finlay? As tensions in Harlem Heat rise, we might find out sooner rather than later.

HOTSEAT

DUDE LOVE

"Vinnie Mac Ruined The WWF!"

DOES MICK FOLEY know who he is?

Foley was known as Cactus Jack Manson early in his career. He acted like an outlaw from the wild west, yet his eyes looked "helter-skelter." When he entered WCW, he dropped "Manson" and was known as Cactus Jack. It was a little confusing, but still possible to follow.

Foley underwent another makeover upon entering the WWF. Cactus Jack became the tormented, sick soul known as Mankind. Since personality overhauls are nothing new in the WWF, such a drastic career change was understandable.

Then came Dude Love. Then Cactus Jack again. Cactus Jack didn't think the fans respected him enough, so he became Dude Love again.

A few months ago, Vince McMahon wanted to dethrone WWF World champion Steve Austin and replace him with someone who could be groomed into a corporate role model. Enter Dude Love, complete with slicked hair and a suit straight from Botany 500—but his white sneakers must have been from Don's Discount Warehouse. He was no Shane McMahon, but Dude had made progress none-

theless. Of course, Austin soundly defeated Love at the WWF's Over the Edge pay-per-view. Vince publicly fired Dude Love the next day.

That was not the end of Mick Foley, however. Sporting the tattered remnants of Love's business attire, Mankind—Foley's long-dormant alter-ego—returned to the federation. Instead of aiming his vitriol toward McMahon, Mankind targeted men like Austin, The Undertaker, and Vader.

Since Mankind is currently at the center of the controversy, Senior Writer Harry Burkett summoned the courage to schedule an interview with him just prior to the WWF's King of the Ring. He was in for a "Dude awakening."

"Yeah, Steve Austin beat me. I was too busy thinking about the chicks by my dressing room, that Three Dog Night eight-track I just bought, and those fancy finger sandwiches I had at the McMahons' pad the day before."

Q: Wait! I thought I scheduled Mankind for an interview! What's this?

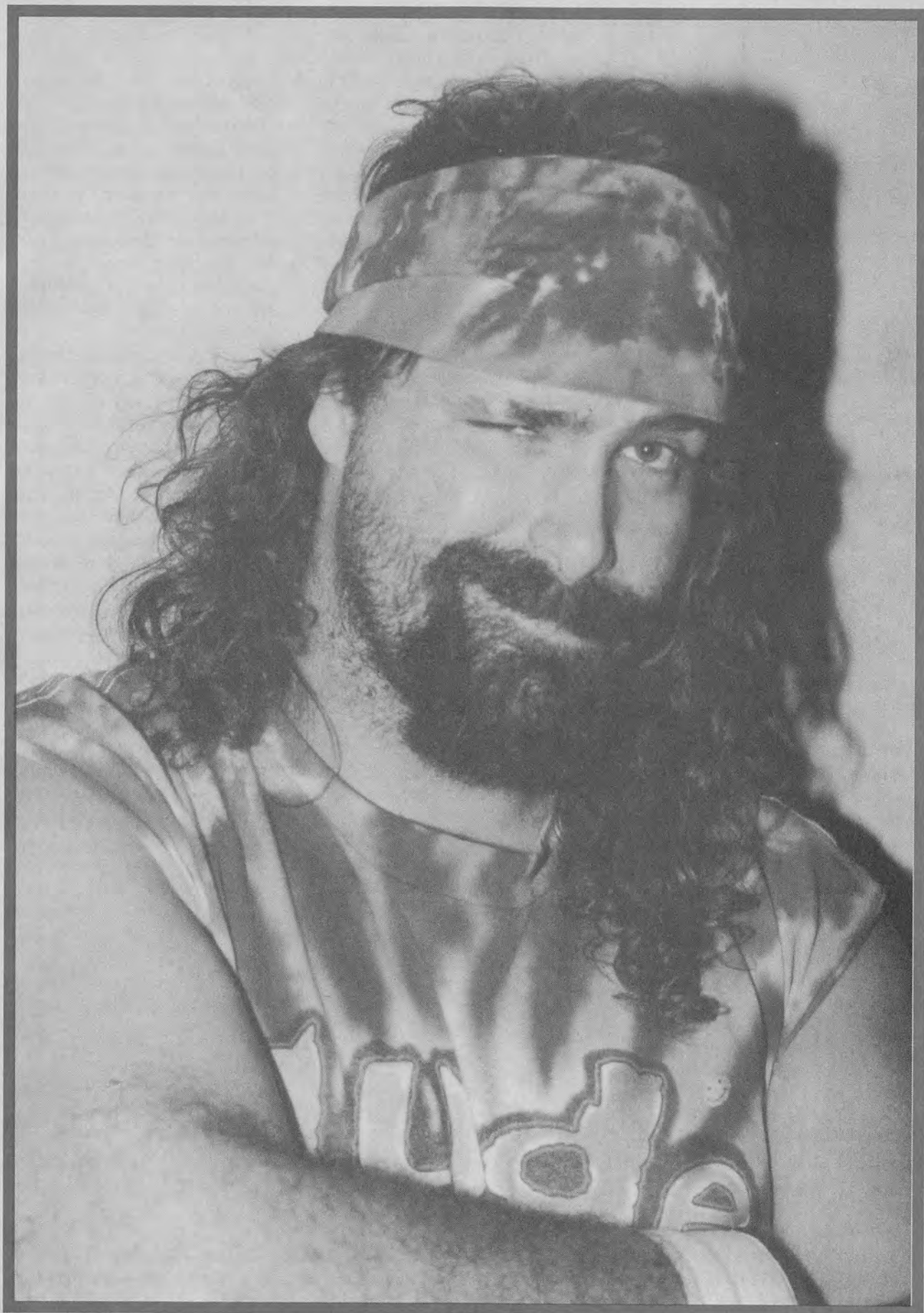
A: (Mick Foley, adorned in his typical "Dude Love" attire, pulls up a chair) Hey, don't look so glum, chum. "His Royal Dudeness" is ready to create some malice in the palace!

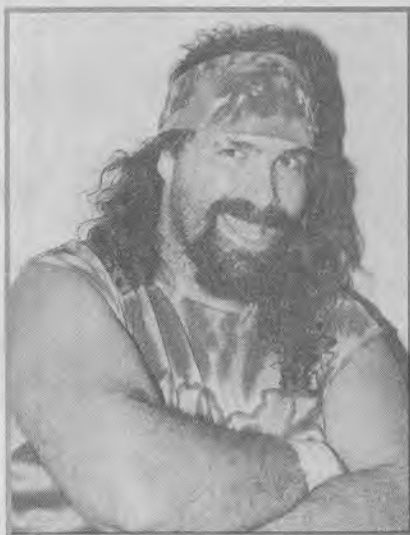
Q: I don't want to sound unappreciative, but this throws a wrench into everything. I have 20 questions written on this notepad here. Every one of them is for Mankind, not Dude Love. I want to ask Mankind about his relationship with Kane and Paul Bearer. I want to know why he's still faithful to Vince McMahon. I want to know why Mankind has been so determined to go after his old tag team partner, Vader. I get the feeling you're not going to supply those answers. And what's that "cat in the hat" thing on your head, anyway?

A: Hey, Harry, don't be so contrary. I'm chokin' on bad vibes, man.

Q: Sorry, Dude, I apologize. Can't you twinkle your nose and slip into your Mankind persona?

A: You're talkin' in a foreign tongue to the "Dude." That kind man, Mankind, the kind





"The fact that Vince McMahon expresses admiration for Mankind just shows you how sick, twisted, and demented he really is. Sometimes I think the 'Vin-Man' is from the same filthy, contaminated cesspool of depravity."

of man everybody should know, is indisposed for a while. Go ahead and shoot, Mr. Reporter. Load those questions with plenty of ammunition, baby!

Q: I'll try to improvise. Are you still angry at Vince McMahon for firing you?

A: Sure, I might be a hippy-dippy, FM-type longhair, but I've got feelings, too. I really thought Vince was my Mc-main-man, you know what I'm saying? Over the Edge was the place where dreams were supposed to come true. Mr. Brisco, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. McMahon were all going to bask in my championship glory. Yeah, Steve Austin

beat me. I was too busy thinking about the chicks by my dressing room, that Three Dog Night eight-track I just bought, and those fancy finger sandwiches I had at the McMahons' pad the day before. I was so caught up in the moment, I didn't focus on the job at hand. But none of that was any excuse for Vince to treat me like yesterday's garbage.

Q: Dude, I want to see if you agree with a theory of mine. Mankind and Dude Love now co-exist in the WWF. It seems as if Mick Foley has a dual purpose. He wants to use Dude Love to criticize Vince McMahon, but at the same time, use Mankind to prove himself to Mr. McMahon. Is that what's going on here?

A: You're no John Glenn, but you might be goin' around Dude's orbit.

Q: You must admit, though, that Dude Love is taking a back seat to Mankind right now. Mankind has joined Kane and Paul Bearer in their feud with Steve Austin and The Undertaker. Vince McMahon has recently praised Mankind. So, which is it? Do you hate Mc-

Mahon for firing you, or do you appreciate his support of Mankind?

A: The fact that Vince McMahon expresses admiration for Mankind just shows you how sick, twisted, and demented he really is. Sometimes I think the "Vin-Man" is from the same filthy, contaminated cesspool of depravity.

Q: But you didn't answer the first question. Are you allowing Mankind to steal some of Dude Love's spotlight?

A: There's enough spotlight for all the brothers and sisters of the world, my friend. In case you've forgotten, Vincey-baby stopped sending me paychecks. That prevents me from living the lifestyle I want to live. I'm stepping back and exploring all my options. Here in the WWF, everything's getting down to the nitty-gritty and I'm a cool cat lookin' for a kitty!

Q: If I interpret that statement accurately, you believe the WWF is reaching the boiling point, correct?

A: Hey, I'm no prophet, Jack. But take a look around. Vinnie Mac has ruined the



Is this really Dude Love? The suit, slicked-back hair, and *Wall Street Journal* seem to indicate otherwise!

WWF! He's allowed a kooky cat like Austin to become champion and, on top of that, fired the WWF's main attraction: me! That just isn't good business sense. Big Mc-Mac showed signs of early Alzheimer's when he gave the "Dude" his walking papers. It's tough

to feel sorry for someone that foolish.

Q: *All right. I think we have a better idea of why you don't like Vince McMahon. Let me ask you this: Why did you betray Steve Austin? The two of you held the WWF World tag team title together. What did he do to make you angry?*

A: Steve-O thrived on abusing me. He badmouthed me, made fun of me, and told everyone I was crazy. In my mind, there was no friendship to betray. He was jealous because I was a chick magnet. All the foxes came to my dressing room, not his.

Q: *I see. But I don't understand why you're with Paul at all. Don't you remember how Kane choke-slammed you?*

A: You need to read your press clippings a little

"Steve-O thrived on abusing me. He badmouthed me, made fun of me, and told everyone I was crazy. He was jealous because I was a chick magnet. All the foxes came to my dressing room, not his."

more carefully. The "Dude" doesn't waste time with those clowns.

Q: *Sorry, I'm getting confused. I keep getting you and Mankind mixed up. Why does Mankind associate himself with them?*

A: I haven't really discussed that with my buddy, Mankind. He's supposed to stop by the joint and listen to some Burt Bacharach. Maybe I'll ask him then.

Q: *Here's a curveball for you: Why don't you and Mankind form a tag team?*

A: Look at Bruce Banner and The Incredible Hulk. Clark Kent and Superman. People don't need to be in the same room to make beautiful music together. You dig?

Q: *I dig. Thanks for substituting for Mankind.*

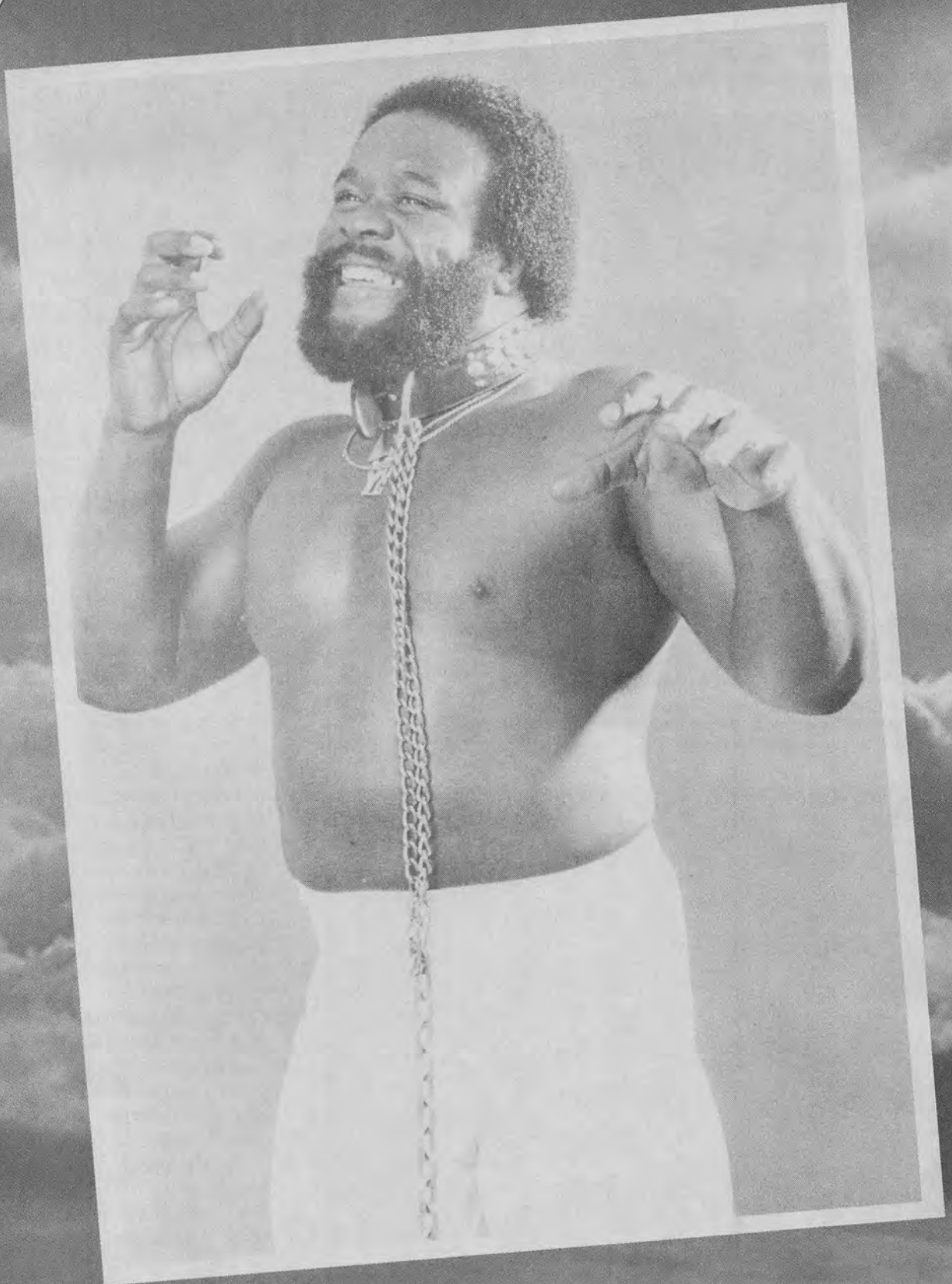
A: No sweat. Have a nice day, I mean, uh, peace, bro. □



Whether as a timekeeper in Toronto (above) or as an opponent at a pay-per-view (below, at Over the Edge), Dude Love is enjoying plenty of confrontations with Steve Austin.



JUNKYARD DOG:



A TRIBUTE TO A UNIQUE BREED



Junkyard Dog was voted Inspirational Wrestler of the Year for courageously wrestling Michael Hayes while still blinded by an earlier assault by the Freebird. JYD won the dog-collar chain match to the utter amazement of all but JYD himself.



Junkyard and Butch Reed pushed each other to the limit dozens of times. JYD resented Reed's selfish attitude and the manner in which he treated the fans.

By Dan Murphy

FOR MANY WRESTLING fans, the death of Sylvester Ritter—a.k.a. Junkyard Dog—struck a very personal chord. In the mid-1980s, JYD was one of the most popular wrestlers in the WWF. Storming the ring to Queen's "Another One Bites The Dust," the Dog would batter an opponent with devastating head-butts before ending the match with his "big thump" powerslam. With victory in hand, JYD would choose some kids from ringside to step

into the ring and join him in a celebratory dance.

Junkyard Dog's love for his fans and the positive example he set will forever be his legacy. When Ritter died on June 2 (the result of an automobile accident; he apparently fell asleep at the wheel), the entire wrestling world sincerely mourned his passing and remembered the tumultuous life the Dog lived.

Ritter grew up in Wadesboro, North Carolina, a poor neighborhood outside of Charlotte. He wrestled and played football in

high school, and was good enough to play offensive guard at Fayetteville State University. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in history and political science, Ritter was drafted by the Houston Oilers in 1975, but a knee injury ended his NFL dreams in training camp.

After playing a year in the World Football League, Ritter worked as a deputy sheriff in Mecklenburg County in North Carolina. At the urging of some of his fellow deputies, the 285-pound Ritter decided to try his hand at wrestling.



JYD's feud with another former football star, Ernie "Big Cat" Ladd was one for the ages. Ladd would regularly insult JYD's intelligence, which only proved his own lack thereof. The Dog was an extremely intelligent man.



JYD was willing to match his power with anyone, including behemoths like Kamala. With the fans solidly behind him, the Dog rarely lost a test of strength.

Ritter soon found his way to the old Calgary Stampede promotion, teaming with a young Jake Roberts and facing two fellow rookies named Bret Hart and Dynamite Kid. But it was when Ritter began to wrestle in the old Mid-South territory that he adopted the name of Junkyard Dog and cultivated one of the biggest fan followings in wrestling.

Coming to the ring with a dog collar around his neck, JYD tore his way through everyone in his path, with an intensity not unlike that displayed by Bill Goldberg. The Dog won fans over and became a working-class hero in the New Orleans area. JYD's popularity defied racial and economic barriers, making him the most significant African-American wrestler since Bobo Brazil.

Junkyard Dog won both the

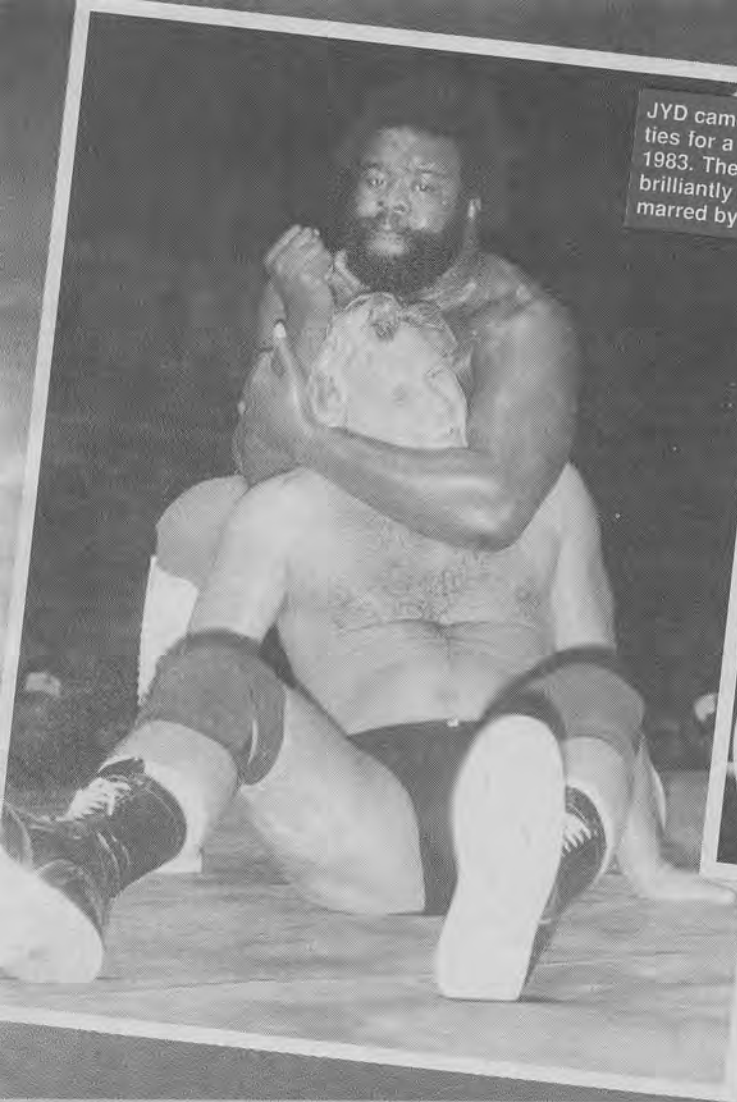
Louisiana and Mississippi titles, and teamed with Buck Robley to beat The Freebirds for the region's tag team title. After the match, Freebird Michael Hayes attacked the Dog, blinding him with a toxic substance, and put his career in jeopardy. JYD defied the doctors and faced Hayes in a dog-collar match in front of more than 30,000 fans, one of the largest gates in wrestling history at the time.

JYD's fans were rabid. Each week the fans taunted the dog's opponents with the chant "Who dat think they can beat dat Dog? Who dat?" (The chant lives on today with fans of the New Orleans Saints.) In 1982, JYD pinned Bob Roop to win the North American title, one of the sport's most prestigious championships prior to the WWF's expansion.

JYD remained in the Mid-South territory, beating stars such as Butch Reed, Terry Funk, and Ted DiBiase, before he accepted an offer to join the WWF.

"I know most fans remember the Dog from his days in the WWF, but I really wish they could have been a part of what he was doing back in the old days in Mid-South," said the JYD's longtime friend, Buddy Landell, who spoke at his funeral. "It was a very special time, and he was a very special man. The Junkyard Dog was electric, really unbeatable. In all my years in wrestling, only Hulkamania in its prime came close to the reaction the Dog got from the fans."

JYD's biggest win in the WWF came at wrestling's first-ever pay-per-view, at which he defeated Randy Savage to win the Wres-



JYD came up short in one of his rare opportunities for a world title, against Nick Bockwinkel in 1983. The hotly anticipated Houston match was brilliantly contested on both sides and was only marred by the champion's rulebreaking.



By 1985, Junkyard Dog had become a national figure in the WWF. He beat Greg Valentine by countout at the first WrestleMania at Madison Square Garden in New York.

tling Classic tournament. The Dog often teamed with Hulk Hogan, and earned a disqualification win over then-Intercontinental champion Greg Valentine at the first WrestleMania. As wrestling entered what has been called its second Golden Age, the Dog was there at the top of the card every step of the way.

Unfortunately, fame took its toll on Ritter. He was having trouble at home, and it was taking its toll on his efforts in the ring. The once-rock-hard Dog began to put on some weight and became sloppy in the ring. He fell into a slump, losing a critical match to "King" Harley Race at WresleMania III. He stepped away from the ring for a while and returned to the WWF after a brief layoff, becoming embroiled in feuds with Ron Bass and Bad News Brown. But his per-

sonal demons got the best of him again, and JYD left the WWF for good in 1989.

The Dog mounted another comeback in 1990 and '91, joining Sting's "Dudes With Attitudes" and waging war against The Four Horsemen. In one of the greatest moments in his career, the Dog upset Ric Flair in a non-title match on a Clash of the Champions card. Soon after, however, the Dog vanished from WCW.

Junkyard Dog's last title reign came in 1992, when he defeated Eddie Gilbert to win the USWA title before losing it to old nemesis Reed two weeks later. JYD was honored at ECW's May Wrestlepalooza pay-per-view; it marked his last appearance in a wrestling ring.

On June 1, he drove back to his hometown of Wadesboro to see

his daughter's high school graduation. He arrived late, and his daughter had gone out with friends for the night. The next morning, Ritter suffered a fatal car accident (no other vehicle was involved) as he was driving back home. His daughter had never known he was coming to the graduation ceremony.

Nearly 2,000 people turned out for Ritter's funeral. Basketball legend Michael Jordan sent his condolences. JYD's death was mentioned on ESPN's Sportscenter.

"Sylvester brought a lot of joy to a lot of people," Landell said. "He lived for his fans; they meant the world to him. I'm very proud to have called him my friend."

The wrestling world was fortunate to have had a chance to get to know Junkyard Dog. There will never be another one like him. □

The telephone wires sizzle each month, as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. Here's the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to feel the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off ... One On One

ON PAPER, STING and The Giant looked like an unbeatable tag team. In reality, though, the team couldn't last for even a single month.

Perhaps that shouldn't have been such a big surprise to anyone. They have never been the best of friends. Two years ago, when The Giant was WCW World champion, Sting tried and tried and tried to beat him. But he lost match after match after match.

After The Giant left the NWO at the end of 1996, he and Sting became tenuous allies, but they were never close. After Scott Hall turned against Kevin Nash, they won the WCW tag team belts together at Slamboree, but Sting objected to The Giant's decision to sign with NWO Hollywood, so, since WCW's tag team champions had suddenly become wrestling's equivalent of a union between The Crips and The Bloods, something had to be done.

J.J. Dillon and the other members of the WCW Executive Committee decided that the title would be put up for grabs in a singles match at The Great American Bash. If Sting, who by then had joined NWO Wolfpac, won, he'd get to pick the co-holder of the title. If The Giant won, he'd get to do the same.

Somehow, Sting put his past failures against The Giant out of his mind and disposed of the seven-footer after hitting him with three consecutive Scorpion deathdrops at the Bash. Sting then wasted little time in naming Kevin Nash his partner (though he also teams regularly with Lex Luger), a move that infuriated The Giant, who despises "Big Sexy." In light of that, it didn't take much to get both men to agree to air their grievances ... "One On One."

ONE O



**"For the life of me, I can't figure out why you decided to bury the hatchet with Hogan and join a losing team in the middle of an important game. I didn't think you were that stupid."
—Sting**

STING: I hope the guys at INSIDE WRESTLING have all their telephone recording equipment in perfect working order. If they don't, I'd imagine it would be hard for them to understand anything the big Giant says, considering his lips are all tied up kissing Hollywood Hogan's butt.

GIANT: Just as I expected, you talk a real tough game over the telephone, "Stinger." If I remember, the last time you mouthed off to me two years ago, I beat you so badly that you spent about a year and a half practicing your mime skills in the rafters of every building I wrestled in. Now you're practically Kevin Nash's little understudy, aren't you?

STING: You know, I always believed it when people told me elephants never forget. Evidently that's not true, because your memory seems to have a few little gaps in it, Dumbo. Maybe I'll Fed Ex you a tape of me laying you out at The Great American Bash.

GIANT: Ancient history, little man. Take your tag team title. I hope you and "Flexy Lexy" or you and

N ONE



"Your problem has always been that you think when all those idiot fans cheer you, that means you're a success ...

Success in this game is making money, kicking tail, and earning respect."

—The Giant

Nash have a long run beating teams like High Voltage and Public Enemy on *WCW Saturday Night*. I, on the other hand, will be where I've belonged since the day I first stepped into the ring—in the winner's circle, wearing all the roses.

STING: The closest you'll come to the wearing of the roses is shoveling the loads of manure out of Hollywood Hogan's locker room. For the life of me, I can't figure out why you decided to bury the hatchet with Hogan and join a losing team in the middle of a game. I didn't think you were that stupid. Why are you doing this to yourself?

GIANT: Would you rather I bury the hatchet with your good buddy Nash? You know what I hate most about The Wolfpac? You guys all talk the talk, but no one's ever walking the walk. You beat me at the Bash. Big deal! That's one win. I've pinned your beaten carcass to the mat more times that I can count, pretty boy. Still, you see fit to mouth off to me. And don't even get me started on Nash.

STING: Oh, that makes a lot of sense. It's not like ever Hogan blows his own horn or anything. I used to have some respect for you, but you really are pitiful now.

GIANT: Say what you want, Sting. Nobody—and I mean nobody—has done for this great sport what Hollywood Hogan has done. Nobody—and I mean nobody—has done for WCW what Eric Bischoff has done. The best that anybody can say about you, Nash, and Luger is that you all look pretty for the ladies and lose the big, tough matches. And "Macho Man" Randy Savage? Please!

STING: So now you're basically the water boy for Hogan and Bischoff. And you're without a title belt. Man, I guess I could see how that would drive a man to smoke as much as you do these days. I guess cigarettes settle the nerves of a man whose once-promising career has gone up in flames.

GIANT: Your problem has always been that you think when all those idiot fans cheer you, that means you're a success. That ain't success. Success in this game is making money, kicking tail, and earning respect. For you to get a shot at the World title, you had to sulk and hide in the rafters and attack people with baseball bats every chance you got. That's because real promoters don't have any respect for the face-painted freak who howls to the crowd anymore. For me to get a World title shot, not that I need one at this stage of the game, all I gotta do is ask.

STING: I bet Curt Hennig and Scott Steiner believe the same thing, too. It's incredible how a few fake compliments and some of Bischoff's hush money is enough to completely brainwash you guys. Although, come to think of it, dinosaurs only had peanut-sized brains, so maybe Eric was able to win you over pretty quickly.

GIANT: Money talks. I think you know what walks.

STING: And size does matter, right? You're full of all kinds of little cliches today, aren't you, big man? Listen, I'm not going to sit here and tell you it was easy seeing you put on that black and white T-shirt. I thought you saw that Hogan and Bischoff were only out for themselves in your first stint in the NWO. I was proud to be fighting on your side, defending WCW all along. I'm asking you to come to your senses. Ditch the sinking ship and run with the wolves. Show some guts for once.

GIANT: You're a petty little man, Sting. You've always thought the world revolves around every little thing you do. Save me from your false concerns, okay? I'm a big man. I can take care of myself. The black and white has big plans in the next few months, and they all revolve around The Giant. Believe it or not, I don't care. Have fun howling for the simpleton fans while you can, because your glory days at the top of the WCW heap are nothing but a memory. And that memory is fading very quickly. □

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Sincerely Yours

(Continued from page 5)



Although the NWO would love to have the gold, they want no part of World champion Bill Goldberg, says reader Vincent Gilliam. He feels nobody in the NWO or WCW is capable of stopping this man.

NWO Hollywood matches up to Goldberg in any category. He is young, mean, and focused. All Hogan and The Wolfpac do is blab on the microphone—all talk and no action. Goldberg has given only a few interviews since he's been in WCW. Meanwhile, he's won over 100 matches without being defeated. Hollywood Hogan gives three interviews during the course of one *Nitro* and defended his title about three times a year.

VINCENT GILLIAM
Tyrone, PA

THE OTHER WOMAN

I really don't understand Jacquelyn. She's a very talented wrestler, but it seems like she's content with replacing the other women in the lives of wrestlers. She tried to replace Woman in the life of Kevin Sullivan. She tried (and failed miserably) to replace Sherri Martel in the lives of Harlem Heat. Now she's in the WWF trying to replace Sable in the life of Marc Mero.

As far as Mero's career goes, maybe she could help him more than Sable did. But when it comes to fan support, Jacquelyn will never be able to replace Sable!

MATT WHEELER
Cahokia, IL

FALLEN IDOL

I started watching wrestling in October 1997 and automatically took a liking to Sting. He was a man of mystery who battled for good. I was so happy for him when he beat Hollywood Hogan at Starrcade that I was cheering and clapping. I didn't care about the controversy. But when he was cheated out of his World title by the NWO at Spring Stampede, there were tears in my eyes.

Then, back in June, Sting joined the NWO Wolfpac. I was devastated. He began to have a bad attitude and spoke a lot. It ruined his image. Sting is no longer "the man." He is just another follower of Nash.

When Sting joined the NWO Wolfpac, I lost an idol and a hero,

and WCW lost one of its greatest wrestlers of all-time.

BRANDON LEAHY
Little Valley, NY

THEY'RE NOT WORTHY!

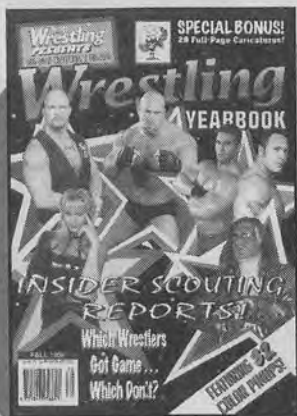
Chris Candido and Lance Storm didn't deserve to lose the ECW tag team title to Rob Van Dam and Sabu. Maybe Chris and Lance lost the inspiration to outdo each other in the ring. Maybe their head cheerleader Francine is a distraction. I just hope the loss doesn't affect The Triple Threat, because Shane Douglas is my favorite wrestler, and he needs those guys around him to remain ECW champ. Candido and Storm are good wrestlers, and they're better wrestlers than Sabu and Van Dam, who need tables and chairs to win.

CANDY BADOLATTO
Cleveland, OH ☐



New ECW tag team champs Rob Van Dam and Sabu won the title the old-fashioned way—they earned it. But Candy Badolatto isn't impressed. She prefers former champs Chris Candido and Lance Storm.

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On The Road

(Continued from page 10)



When Ellering sees Hawk and Animal with Sunny, he doesn't like what he sees. Maybe what he did to them the night after King of the Ring will serve as a wakeup call.

butts kicked. So tell me now: What's Sunny done for them lately?"

We've seen feuds in which teams turned against managers or managers turned against teams, but this one is unusual because it's not so much between LOD 2000 and Ellering as it is between Ellering and Sunny. What we have here is a battle over territory: Hawk and Animal ignored Ellering's advice, Ellering got mad, then Ellering got even.

This much is true: Ellering created The Road Warriors. For years, he was the brains behind their brutality, the reason for their success.

This much is also true: The Road Warriors didn't always dominate the way they should have, and Ellering often shouldered the blame.

Hawk: "He thinks he built

some kind of dynasty. Well, we could have won world tag team titles with him or without him."

Animal: "He was always around when the going was good. He seemed to disappear when the going got tough."

Sunny: "I brought Animal and Hawk back together. I didn't hear about Ellering doing anything but sitting on his duff."

Perhaps Ellering joining the DOA is just the jump-start Hawk and Animal needed to regain their killer instinct and run roughshod over the WWF tag team pool like they should. Sure, the WWF's tag teams aren't bad, but there are no Steiners, no Eaton and Lane, no Morton and Gibson in their prime, no British Bulldogs, no Bret Hart and Jim Neidhart. If they don't win the tag belts soon, theirs and Sunny's failure will be enormous.

Ellering, meanwhile, will be cackling in the background.

"There's another piece of advice I gave them when we had our little meeting during King of the Ring weekend," Ellering said. "I told them they had to know when it was time to step aside. They just laughed when I said that. I told them they had a great run, but there comes a day when that run has to come to an end. Sunny's a pretty woman, and they've always liked being around pretty women. Maybe that's their incentive."

Ellering knows Hawk and Animal better than anyone in the world, including Sunny. Perhaps he's right and LOD 2000's run is over. Maybe they'll never see the year 2000, at least as a team. Or maybe they'll get one last rush by destroying the man who created them. □

Behind The Door

(Continued from page 12)

the belt back to Austin.

Crazy things are happening in wrestling these days. For instance, Bearer managed The Undertaker for all those years and never let on that he bore a child with Undertaker's mother. Undertaker never mentioned a half-brother. Then Kane showed up.

One of the other crazy things in wrestling is that Vince McMahon would convince Kane to put into writing that he'd set himself on fire if he didn't win the belt from Austin. For allowing such a stipulation to be put into a contract, McMahon should be banned from wrestling. Yeah, I know, McMahon

owns the WWF, but anybody who orders a contract stipulation calling for something that extreme isn't dealing with a full deck, or even a half deck. McMahon has no deck at all.

Seriously, now (and this goes for you violence-loving ECW fans out there, too), would you really want to watch a man burning to death? Can you imagine how horrific that would be? Can there possibly be anything fun about that? And would any sane man, even Kane, purposely set himself on fire?

Good thing the stipulation didn't hold for their rematch.

You know, I don't dislike McMahon as much as I used to, mostly because I dislike Eric Bischoff a lot more than I used to. As for the McMahon-Ted Turner comparison, at least McMahon has never tried to sell us The Goodwill Games as a true athletic competition that anyone cares about. Yes, McMahon did once promote a very bad boxing pay-per-view card. And he did give us "Hulkamania" for all those years. And he did give us those stupid foam hands that kids just love to wear. And when he was a broadcaster, he always had this annoying habit of referring to WWF wrestlers as WWF superstars. Even the Godwinns.

As for my doubts that Kane and Bearer are father and son,

Gerald Brisco, one of McMahon's closest confidantes, insisted, "Of course they're father and son! Don't you see the love in their eyes?"

Well, no.

"Didn't you see how happy Bearer was when his son won the World belt? This is one of the most heartwarming stories in wrestling history."

Right. Let's do another DNA test and I'll pick the expert this time.

Also, show me the father who would allow his son to get involved in a match in which, if he lost, he'd have to set himself on fire.

But one day as WWF World champ. You know, that sounds as if it might run in Bearer's genes. □



Bearer is always there by his son's side when he heads into battle. But Dave Rosenbaum wonders what kind of father would allow his son to enter into a match after which he'd have to immolate himself if he lost.

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The Insider

(Continued from page 14)



Kevin Nash standing over a fallen WCW wimp such as Dallas Page—now *that's* a familiar sight. Two years ago, it would have been Nash doing the damage. Now he's there to help the poor guy.

me get this little bit of business out of the way. I am implementing a new policy. It pertains to this column and anything else I write, including the award-winning *Wrestling Bad Guys*. I will no longer be recognizing Nash's group as NWO Wolfpac. From now on, it's just The Wolfpac. Nash and his cronies hardly deserve to call themselves NWO anything.

Perhaps Nash could not stomach the growing cascade of boos as fans grew increasingly tired of Hogan's and Eric Bischoff's antics. He feared that his cult following was being undermined by the actions of others. So instead of just tolerating the cheers, he embraced them and, in the process, reduced himself to just another fan-pandering lowlife who

responds to hoots and hollers like Pavlov's dog.

Kevin Nash used to be the ultimate rulebreaker. His actions in WCW and during the last few months of his stay in the WWF made me forget the corporate champ known as Diesel. He had the size and bad attitude that struck fear into the hearts of heroes. He was such a troublemaker that he was not just fined and suspended for his renegade actions—he was hauled out of arenas in handcuffs!

Those days are behind him now, perhaps never to return. Rulebreakers fall so easily these days that I should not be surprised when another one gets away. Nash was supposed to be different. He was supposed to be above that type of action. He had it all, plus he had people cheering his nefarious actions along the way. It all got the best of him.

In a few days, I will be assembling the Top 20 for the December issue of *Bad Guys*. Sadly, one name will be missing—a name that has occupied one of the top five spots since *Bad Guys* made its return inside *Wrestle America*. Kevin Nash seemingly had a permanent home in this upper echelon of rulebreaking. What once was thought of as a mansion of badness with a solid foundation is nothing more than a mobile home. A trailer that has been hauled off to the other side of the tracks.

So make all the wolf (or are they bunny?) ears you want. Wear the red and black to your heart's content. I will just need a moment of silence for a rulebreaking spirit that streaked through the wrestling skies like a comet. In that moment, I will bow my head, close my eyes, and quietly chant ...

"At-ti-ca. At-ti-ca."



On Assignment

(Continued from page 16)

days. So why is Bret Hart an exception to this rule?

As I said, instigating a feud with Flair was the first big mistake he made. You don't tug on Superman's cape. You don't pull the mask off the ol' Lone Ranger. And you don't mess around with Ric Flair when you're wrestling in WCW. No matter how dirty he plays the game, Flair will be loved by WCW faithful. Bret Hart may be a hero in Canada, but the positive responses he gets north of the border don't compare to the responses Flair gets when he makes appearances at WCW events. Any goodwill he built up after the WWF title debacle disappeared once he insulted the legendary "Nature Boy."

Okay, he created a stir by joining NWO Hollywood, but has that move benefited him? He is perceived as one of Hogan's many associ-

ates and not a leader by any means. Also, have you noticed that he refuses to formally align himself with NWO Hollywood by donning the black-and-white T-shirts the group has made famous? Am I reading too much into that? If not, then where exactly does Bret stand?

Aside from his affiliation with NWO Hollywood, I think there is one big reason why fans are so turned off by the "Hitman": that incessant whining. How many times do we have to hear how a referee screwed you, Bret? How



Bret Hart and Ric Flair made amends after feuding earlier this year, but many fans of the "Nature Boy" never forgave Bret for trying to humble their hero. The "Hitman" has made some strange decisions in WCW.

often do we have to be reminded that you were ripped off? Okay, Bret. It happened. Now it's time to get over it. Everyone else has moved on. Why can't you?

Bret is committed to WCW for the next three years, so he had better make the best of the situation. He needs to find the ingredients to WCW success. Going from World champion to occasional main-eventer is hardly the stuff that makes legends.

So what can he do?

First, he needs to turn against Hogan as soon as possible. At-

tack him. Betray him. He should not join any other established group, either. He should stand on his own two feet. If he doesn't feel comfortable doing that, he should at least form his own new clique.

Remember the "British Bulldog" and Jim Neidhart (not many WCW fans do)? They are languishing right now and could use a career boost as well. Bring back The Hart Foundation to battle the other groups. Then add an established WCW star to strengthen the group.

Finally, stop crying about referees screwing you. Wrestling fans are usually willing to forget a lot of the bad things you've done in the past if you give them a good reason to do so. Remember that. Recover. Heal. And most of all, shut up.

Whether Bret should be good or bad is not the issue here. Bret Hart has to be a prominent

player. He has to let his talents dictate the course of his career. That is how he rose to superstar status in the WWF in the first place. WCW should not be any different. If you cannot pick up where you left off, Bret, then it is time to start over.

I never thought I would miss the bad Bret Hart who dominated the WWF in his last year. Now I long to see *that* Bret Hart again. At least that Bret Hart was a leader. I don't think I can stand to watch Bret Hart the follower much longer. □

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November 1995: One Defense In Four Months?! Strip Hulk Hogan Of The Title—Now! Also: Alex Wright, Tatanka, King of Ring, Chris Benoit, Backlund-Clinton.

December 1995: White With Fear, Green With Envy: Why The Undertaker Had To Bury Kama. Also: Vader-Hogan, Warrior-Renegade, Gangstas-PE,

Waylon Mercy, Heavenly Bodies.

January 1996: Our Holiday Wish List For 1996! Also: ude: Scott Norton, Sid Vicious, Psicosis-Misterio, Barry Horowitz, Sabu.

February 1996: Wrestling's Top Stars: What 1996 Has In Store For Them! Also: Goldust, Sherri-Parker, Mikey Whipwreck, Smokin' Gunns.

March 1996: His Excellency! How Bret Masterminded Diesel's Execution. Also: Jeff Jarrett, Giant, Jim Cornette, Survivor Series, Eddy Guerrero.

May 1996: Ready ... Aim ... Maim! The Sick Race To Cripple Shawn Michaels. Also: Shane Douglas, Arn Anderson, Jerry Lawler, Hogan-Flair.

June 1996: Luger Or Hogan? If Sting Makes The Wrong Choice, He's Thought! Also: Road Warriors, Roddy Piper, Ahmed Johnson, Raven, Al Snow.

August 1996: The Greening Of Wrestling: How Sting & Shawn Will Become \$50,000,000 Men! Also: Bodydonnas, Giant, Guerrero-Misterio, George Steele, Goldust & Marlena.

September 1996: She's No Boob! Sunny: More Than Just Sex Appeal. Also: Lawler-Jarrett, 911, Brian Pillman, Alex Wright, championship chaos.

October 1996 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Jake Roberts, Yokozuna, Giant-Konnin, Ahmed Johnson, Chris Jericho, strutters.

November 1996: The Steiners: Feasting On A Buffet Of Violence. Also: Shawn Michaels, Sabu-Douglas, King of Ring, Eddy Guerrero, truck stop terror.

December 1996: Three Women For Four Horsemen? The Hot Search For A Fourth Filly Has Begun! Also: Sunny & Gunns, Giant, Goldust, Cornette & Hart, Jerry Jarrett.

Holiday 1996 (Special Issue): The Tombstone: Wrestling's Deadliest Finisher. Also: 1997 calendar, "Psycho" Sid, Benoit-Misterio, Steiners-NWO, Pit Bull I, Justin Liger.

January 1997: Dreaming Of A Sunny Christmas ... Our Holiday Wish List For The Stars. Also: Michaels & Undertaker, Sting, Barry Windham, Faarooq, NWO.

February 1997: Trouble In EgoVille: Is There An NWO Within The NWO? Also: Chris Candido, Bret-Shawn, Ric Flair, Joey Styles, Liger-Benoit.

March 1997: Why Bret's Execution Will Be Excellent By WrestleMania! Also: Roddy Piper, Syxx, Survivor Series, Steve Austin, talent scouts.

April 1997 (Special Issue): The 1997 Inside Wrestling Computer Tournament. Also: Helmsley-Marlena-Sable, Nasty Boys, Flash Funk, Taz, Rick Steiner.

May 1997: Giant vs. Hogan: "Hey, Little Man, What Ya Gonna Do?" Also: Woman-Benoit-Sullivan, Shawn-Bret, Undertaker, Scott Hall, Sabu.

June 1997: Ahmed Johnson Reveals: "I Almost Joined The Nation Of Domination." Plus: Mankind, Lex Luger, NWO, Davey Boy Smith, Jerry Graham.

July 1997 (Special Issue): House Of Horrors!

Fourth World Title Change In '97 ... Can The Undertaker Restore Order? Plus: Stars answer personal questions, Steve McMichael, Road Warriors, Syxx, Sandman-Lari-Tyler.

August 1997: Bret Hart Lashes Out: "You're All Responsible For What I'm About To Do!" Plus: Shawn Michaels, Chyna, Steiners, Sting, Gilbert journey.

September 1997: The NWO's Anniversary Report. Plus: Lex Luger, Shawn-Bret, Terry Funk, Rob Van Dam, Ken Shamrock.

October 1997 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Plus: LOD-PG-13, Rob Van Dam, Flair & Horsemen, Ken Shamrock, McMichael-White, Madd & Mama Maxxine.

November 1997: WWF War Zone: Interfederation Battles Rock The Sport! Plus: Ahmed Johnson, Curt Hennig, Nueva World Order, Chris Candido, Dan Severn.

December 1997: Losing Is Bull! Has Dennis Rodman Had It With Hulk Hogan? Plus: Steve Austin, Jarrett & Debra, Harts, Funk-Francine, Chris Jericho.

Holiday 1997 (Special Issue): The Steiners' Million-Dollar Gamble! Plus: 1998 calendar, Alex Wright, The Patriot, Sgt. Slaughter, Turnbuckle Turkey Awards.

January 1998: Sexy Seasons Greetings From Sable: Our Holiday Wish For The Stars. Plus: Bret Hart, Rey Misterio Jr., Steve Austin, WCW Executive Committee, Fritz Von Erich.

February 1998: Wrestling's Top Stars: What's Ahead For 1998. Plus: Brian Pillman, Sting, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Reckless Youth-Flash Funk.

March 1998: Hart Transplant! The Truth Behind Bret's Defection To WCW. Plus: Steve McMichael, Bam Bam Bigelow, Steve Austin, Disco Inferno.

April 1998 (Special Issue): The 1998 Inside Wrestling Computer Tournament. Also: Scott Hall, Marlena, Chris Benoit, Gunn & James, Sabo-Sandman.

May 1998: Is The WWF Screwing Another Hart? Plus: Steve Austin, Dallas Page, Booker T, Larry Zbyszko, Al Snow.

June 1998: Exclusive! Steve Austin: The 10 Men Who Inspired His Toughness. Plus: Dusty & Dustin, Perry Saturn, Morris, Jeff Jarrett.

July 1998 (Special Issue): Top Stars Answer Your Personal Questions. Plus: Jericho-Misterio Jr., Steve Austin, Sunny, Scott Steiner, Christopher-Michinoku.

Aug. 1998: WrestleMania XIV: The Real Winners And Losers. Plus: Sunny, Curt Hennig, Dan Severn, Ultimo Dragon.

Sept. 1998: Power Surge! While The NWO Fiddles ... These Men Are Burning. Plus: Sable, Ultimo-Guerrero, DeGeneration X-Owen, Rocky Maivia, Mad Russian-Rambo.

Oct. 1998 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Plus: Steve Austin, Taka Michinoku, Al Snow, Hollywood Hogan, Roddy Piper, Misawa-Kiwada.

INSIDE WRESTLING

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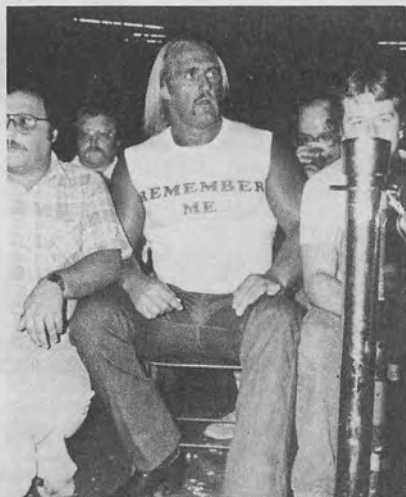
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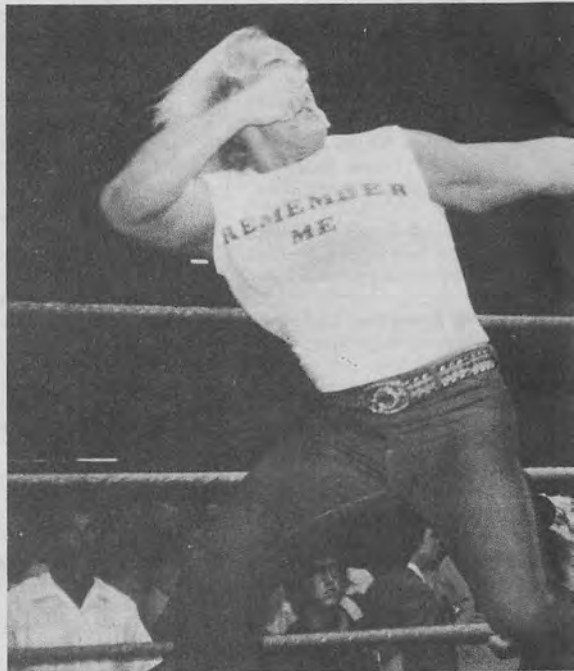
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We Sent Hulk Hogan To Cover Bockwinkel vs. Wahoo . . .

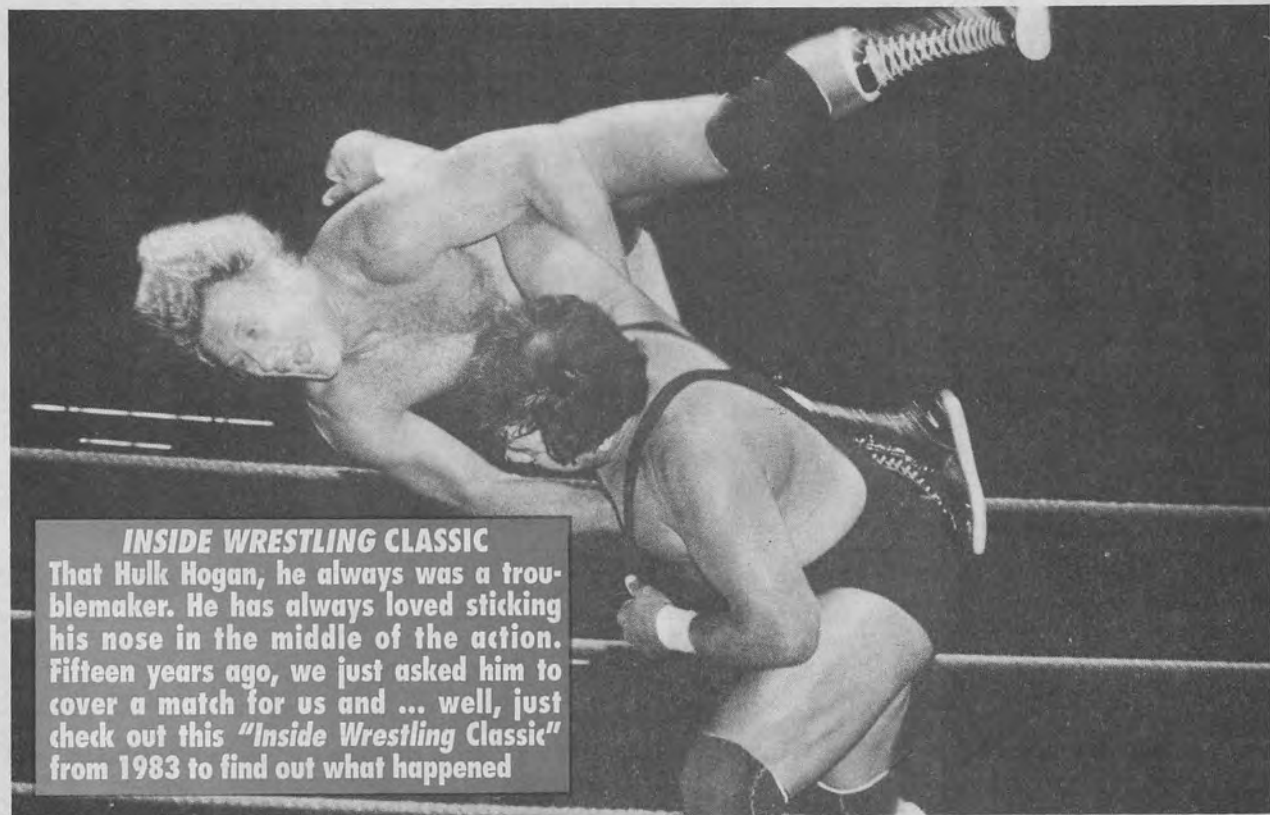


AND ALL HELL

BROKE LOOSE!



Photos by Nick Karch & Bruce Kreitzman



INSIDE WRESTLING CLASSIC

That Hulk Hogan, he always was a troublemaker. He has always loved sticking his nose in the middle of the action. Fifteen years ago, we just asked him to cover a match for us and ... well, just check out this "Inside Wrestling Classic" from 1983 to find out what happened

Hulk Hogan made a surprise appearance at the St. Paul Civic Center recently. He was not there to wrestle, however. He was at ringside as a special *Inside Wrestling* correspondent to cover the match between Wahoo McDaniel and AWA World champion Nick Bockwinkel. The article was never written. And for very good reason!



Wahoo McDaniel was doing extremely well against Nick Bockwinkel (above and opposite bottom) until Bobby Heenan interfered. Hulk Hogan, who was at ringside to cover the match for *Inside Wrestling* (far opposite corner) jumped into the ring and went after Bockwinkel and Heenan (left).

By Joe Bua

[Editor's Note: Hulk Hogan, originally assigned to cover this match, became too involved in the story to provide an impartial account. Assistant Editor Joseph Bua, on hand to report on another match that evening, filed this story.]

YOU CAN READ hundreds of magazines, watch thousands of matches, and talk to every man who has ever stepped into the ring, but you will still not know one-tenth what a trained professional wrestler knows about his sport. The editors of *Inside Wrestling* feel it is important that the readers see a match through the eyes of a professional wrestler from time to time. Only a professional wrestler could fully understand what it

means to step into the ring against a man whose sole objective is to pin your shoulders to the canvas for three seconds or beat you into submission.

Hulk Hogan understands. And he also intelligent enough to put his thoughts down on paper in the form of an objective article. So when we learned that Hogan had come in from Japan to take care of some business at his home in Venice Beach, California, we asked him if he would be our special correspondent for the AWA World title match between champion Nick Bockwinkel and Wahoo McDaniel at the St. Paul Civic Center.

Even though it is well known that Hogan had left the AWA frustrated in his attempts to claim Bockwinkel's title, due in part to the interference of the champion's manager, Bobby Heenan, Managing Editor Stu Saks was

confident that the Hulk could provide an objective account of the important match.

"Hogan knows both Wahoo and Bockwinkel very well," Saks reasoned. "I realize that he's had his differences with Bockwinkel in the past, but I still think he can give the readers a perspective on the match that a reporter wouldn't be able to. He's a very intelligent guy. I think he'll do a good job."

When Hogan agreed to do the story, I was pulled off the assignment. I would still be in the arena that night, however, to report on the AWA tag team title match in which Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell lost their belts to Sheiks Patera and Blackwell.

Working with Hogan was something I was looking forward to. I couldn't imagine the Hulk dressed in a suit and tie, scribbling away furiously into a note-



The referee, who had been distracted by Heenan for the last few seconds while Bockwinkel illegally gained the advantage, moves in to break up the action. Soon Heenan would disregard the referee entirely and jump into the ring to attack McDaniel.

book while Bockwinkel and McDaniel fought in the ring.

When I walked into the arena, I realized that image would never materialize. Hogan was an imposing figure at ringside, wearing a shirt bearing the words "Remember Me." He had no tie, no notebook, and no pen.

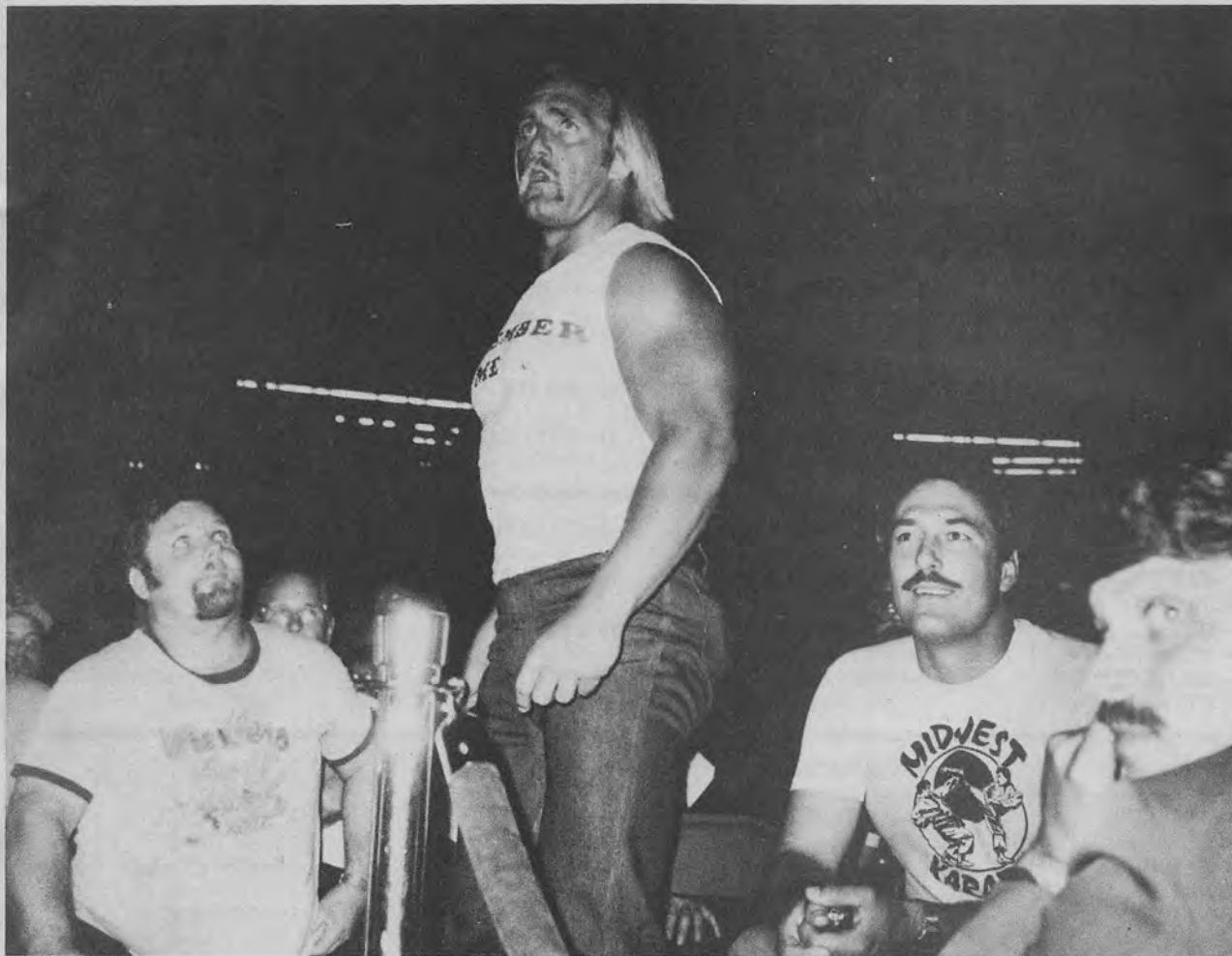
"You're not going to take notes?" I asked.

"Would Ulysses S. Grant take notes on the Civil War? Don't worry about me, I'll remember everything, kid. Expect the unexpected, right?"

"Sure," I said, not knowing exactly what he meant. I figured

that remark was better left alone.

The match progressed as expected: manager Bobby Heenan barking instructions to his champion, and Bockwinkel carrying out those orders. McDaniel, however, seemed to possess an intense sort of electrical power that night. His timing was precise and



Hogan, being taunted by Bockwinkel from the ring, leaps to his feet (above). Hogan and Wahoo have departed for the dressing room, leaving a weary Bockwinkel and a bloody Heenan behind (below).



the execution of his holds approached perfection. Bockwinkel experienced a constant stream of frustration.

As Heenan saw his wrestler get deeper and deeper into trouble, he acted in his usual fashion. He distracted the referee's attention long enough for his wrestler to illegally abuse McDaniel and gain the advantage. And once he saw that it was safe to do so, he climbed into the ring and helped Bockwinkel pummel his semiconscious challenger.

Bockwinkel, who received an automatic disqualification for Heenan's interference, suddenly disregarded his weary foe and started screaming toward the crowd. In seconds, *Inside Wrestling's* special correspondent, Hulk Hogan, was in the ring, pounding away at Bockwinkel. Heenan tried to escape, but he

couldn't. Hogan pounded the manager until his face was covered with tiny rivulets of blood.

Hogan then escorted a beaten McDaniel back to the dressing room, leaving Bockwinkel and Heenan in the center of the ring. I followed close behind, hoping to find out exactly what happened.

"Just one thing," I said to Hogan once we were in Wahoo's dressing room. "What did you mean by 'expect the unexpected?'"

"Hey, even I didn't expect this," he replied. "But it made me feel awfully good."

"By the way, Joe," he added, "when do you need the story by?"

I told him he might just as well forget about it.

He winked and waved goodbye. □

OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

- 1—**STEVE AUSTIN**
(1) WWF World champion
- 2—**BILL GOLDBERG**
(2) WCW World champion
- 3—**STING**
(6) No. 1 contender: WCW World title

- 4—**THE UNDERTAKER**
(7) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
- 5—**KEN SHAMROCK**
(-) No. 3 contender: WWF World title
- 6—**CHRIS JERICO**
(15) WCW cruiserweight champion
- 7—**HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY**
(4) No. 4 contender: WWF World title

- 8—**DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
(-) No. 4 contender: WCW World title
- 9—**KANE**
(-) No. 6 contender: WWF World title
- 10—**ROB VAN DAM**
(10) ECW TV champion
- 11—**ROCKY MAIVIA**
(8) WWF Intercontinental champion

- 12—**KENTA KOBASHI**
(3) All-Japan Triple Crown champion
- 13—**REY MISTERIO JR.**
(-) No. 8 contender: WCW World title
- 14—**TATSUMI FUJINAMI**
(9) IWGP heavyweight champion
- 15—**BRET HART**
(-) No. 5 contender: WCW World title

WCW

- 1—**BILL GOLDBERG**
(2) 270, Tulsa, OK
- 2—**STING**
(4) 260, Venice Beach, CA
- 3—**HOLLYWOOD HOGAN**
(1) 275, Venice Beach, CA

- 4—**CHRIS JERICO**
(8) 225, Vancouver, British Columbia
- 5—**DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
(-) 260, Tampa, FL
- 6—**BRET HART**
(-) 235, Calgary, Alberta
- 7—**KEVIN NASH**
(10) 356, Detroit, MI

- 8—**THE GIANT**
(7) 430, parts unknown
- 9—**REY MISTERIO JR.**
(-) 140, San Diego, CA
- 10—**EDDY GUERRERO**
(-) 221, El Paso, TX
- 11—**PERRY SATURN**
(12) 234, Boston, MA

- 12—**CURT HENNING**
(-) 235, Minneapolis, MN
- 13—**DEAN MALENKO**
(5) 216, Tampa, FL
- 14—**SCOTT HALL**
(-) 290, Miami, FL
- 15—**JUVENTUD GUERRERA**
(-) 165, Mexico City, Mexico

WWF

- 1—**STEVE AUSTIN**
(1) 252, Victoria, TX
- 2—**ROCKY MAIVIA**
(2) 272, Pearl City, HI
- 3—**THE UNDERTAKER**
(5) 328, parts unknown

- 4—**KEN SHAMROCK**
(4) 235, San Bernardino, CA
- 5—**HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY**
(3) 279, Greenwich, CT
- 6—**MANKIND**
(-) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
- 7—**KANE**
(7) 345, parts unknown

- 8—**X-PAC**
(-) 212, Minneapolis, MN
- 9—**OWEN HART**
(8) 227, Calgary, Alberta
- 10—**D-LO BROWN**
(-) 305, Bronx, NY
- 11—**VADER**
(11) 450, Denver, CO

- 12—**FAAROOQ**
(6) 291, Perry, GA
- 13—**JEFF JARRETT**
(9) 230, Nashville, TN
- 14—**STEVE BLACKMAN**
(13) 245, Annville, PA
- 15—**MARC MERO**
(15) 235, Buffalo, NY

ECW

- 1—**SHANE DOUGLAS**
(1) 240, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2—**ROB VAN DAM**
(2) 237, Battle Creek, MI
- 3—**TAZ**
(3) 248, Red Hook, NY

- 4—**BAM BAM BIGELOW**
(8) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 5—**MASATO TANAKA**
(-) 235, Tokyo, Japan
- 6—**SABU**
(4) 225, Bombay
- 7—**THE SANDMAN**
(7) 244, Philadelphia, PA

- 8—**TOMMY DREAMER**
(11) 245, Yonkers, NY
- 9—**JERRY LYNN**
(9) 214, Minneapolis, MN
- 10—**JUSTIN CREDIBLE**
(13) 225, Waterbury, CT
- 11—**LANCE STORM**
(12) 234, Calgary, Alberta

- 12—**CHRIS CANDIDO**
(10) 226, Carteret, NJ
- 13—**JOHN KRONUS**
(-) 256, Cleveland, OH
- 14—**SPIKE DUDLEY**
(-) 155, parts unknown
- 15—**MIKEY WHIPWRECK**
(15) 187, New York, NY

INTERNATIONAL

- 1—**KENTA KOBASHI**
(7) 261, Fukuchiyama, Japan
- 2—**TATSUMI FUJINAMI**
(2) 234, Oita, Japan
- 3—**JUSHIN LIGER**
(4) 206, Hiroshima, Japan

- 4—**MASA CHONO**
(-) 235, Tokyo, Japan
- 5—**SHINYA HASHIMOTO**
(11) 287, Gifu, Japan
- 6—**TOSHIKI KAWADA**
(1) 245, Ashikaga, Japan
- 7—**FRANZ SCHUMANN**
(8) 201, Graz, Austria

- 8—**KENSUKE SASAKI**
(5) 233, Tokyo, Japan
- 9—**UNIVERSO 2000**
(6) 215, parts unknown
- 10—**PERRO AGUAYO**
(9) 215, Zacatecas, Mexico
- 11—**ULTIMO DRAGON**
(10) 175, Mexico City, Mexico

- 12—**MAUNUKEA MOSSMAN**
(12) 245, Honolulu, HI
- 13—**KIYOSHI TIMURA**
(13) 191, Yokohama, Japan
- 14—**WOLF HAWKFIELD**
(-) 272, New Port Richey, FL
- 15—**DOUG GILBERT**
(-) 241, Lexington, TN

TOP 15 TAG TEAMS

- 1—**KANE & MANKIND**
(3) WWF World tag team champions
- 2—**NWO WOLFPAC**
(-) WCW World tag team champions
- 3—**SHIRO KOSHINAKA & GENICHIRO TENRYU**
(-) IWGP tag team champions
- 4—**BILLY GUNN & JESSE JAMES**
(1) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 5—**TOSHIKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE**
(-) All-Japan International tag team champions

- 6—**SABU & ROB VAN DAM**
(8) ECW tag team champions
- 7—**EIGHT-BALL & SKULL**
(14) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 8—**LOD 2000**
(5) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 9—**MASA CHONO & HIROYOSHI TENZAN**
(-) No. 1 contenders: IWGP tag title
- 10—**OWEN HART & ROCKY MAIVIA**
(-) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title

- 11—**AXL ROTTEN & MAHONEY**
(-) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title
- 12—**THE HEADBANGERS**
(11) No. 5 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 13—**PUBLIC ENEMY**
(13) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title
- 14—**THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS**
(-) No. 6 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 15—**LITTLE GUIDO & TRACEY SMOTHERS**
(-) No. 2 contenders: ECW tag title

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue ... Championships highlighted in bold on the "Roll Call Of Champions" have changed hands since our previous issue ... The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place.

For period ended July 17, 1998

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: KENTA KOBASHI
(June 12, 1998; from Toshiaki Kawada; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
TOSHIAKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE
(January 25, 1998; from Johnny Ace & Kenta Kobashi; Yokohama, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPION: KENTA KOBASHI
(June 12, 1998; from Toshiaki Kawada; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-PRO WRESTLING UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: MAXX JUSTICE
(May 16, 1998; from Sam Fatur; Pinole, CA)

ALL-PRO WRESTLING UNIVERSAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: FRANK & VIC MURDOCH
(May 30, 1998; from Tony Jones & Moondog Moretti; Pacifica, CA)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
ROBERT ROMA
(July 11, 1998; from Chainz; Stuart, VA)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
RICK DEEZEL & DANIEL MAYES
(May 9, 1998; from Generation X; Elkin, NC)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION U.S. CHAMPION: BRIAN DANZIG
(March 28, 1998; from Steve Niles; Bassett, VA)

ECW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHANE DOUGLAS
(November 30, 1997; from Bam Bam Bigelow; Monaca, PA)

ECW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: ROB VAM DAM & SABU
(June 27, 1998; from Chris Candido & Lance Storm; Philadelphia, PA)

ECW TELEVISION CHAMPION: ROB VAN DAM
(April 4, 1998; from Bam Bam Bigelow; Buffalo, NY)

INT'L PRO WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TOM BRANDI
(June 13, 1998; from King Kong Bundy; Lebanon, PA)

IPWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: BUDDY LANDELL
(June 13, 1998; from Jimmy Cicero; Alexandria, VA)

IPWA LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CHRISTIAN YORK
(June 13, 1998; from Julio Sanchez; Alexandria, VA)

IWGP HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TATSUMI FUJINAMI
(April 4, 1998; from Kensuke Sasaki; Tokyo, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SHIRO KOSHINAKA & GENICHIRO TENRYU
(July 15, 1998; from Masahiro Chono & Hiroyoshi Tenzan; Sapporo, Japan)

IWGP JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JUSHIN LIGER
(February 7, 1998; from Shinjiro Otani; Sapporo, Japan)

MUSIC CITY WRESTLING NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: THE COLORADO KID
(April 4, 1998; won battle royal; Nashville, TN)

MUSIC CITY WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STEVEN DUNN & RENO RIGGINS
(May 30, 1998; title previously vacant; Nashville, TN)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DAN SEVERN
(February 24, 1995; from Chris Candido; Erlanger, KY)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DEVON STORM
(February 14, 1998; beat Reckless Youth in tournament final; Mount Holly, NJ)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS
(March 30, 1998; from The Headbangers; Albany, NY)

NWA NEW ENGLAND CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION: TRE
(May 9, 1998; from Millennium; Somerville, MA)

NWA NEW ENGLAND HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: ERICH SBRACCIA
(January 24, 1998; beat Vic Steamboat in tournament final; Ridgefield, CT)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: KENTA KOBASHI
(June 12, 1998; from Toshiaki Kawada; Tokyo, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
MAUNUKEA MOSSMAN
(August 22, 1997; from Yoshinari Ogawa; Tokyo, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
TOSHIAKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE
(January 25, 1998; from Johnny Ace & Kenta Kobashi; Yokohama, Japan)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING AMERICAS CHAMPION:
RECKLESS YOUTH
(June 27, 1998; from Lance Diamond; Pottstown, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
JULIO SANCHEZ
(June 19, 1998; from Tiger Khan; Reading, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
INFERNO KID & MIKE QUACKENBUSH
(May 15, 1998; from Blue Thunder & J.R. Ryder; Reading, PA)

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: ITALIAN STALLION
(June 27, 1998; from George South; Gaffney, SC)

WCW CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION: CHRIS JERICHO
(June 14, 1998; beat Dean Malenko; Baltimore, MD)

WCW TELEVISION CHAMPION: BOOKER T
(June 14, 1998; from Dave Finlay; Baltimore, MD)

WCW U.S. CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT
(Most recently held by Bill Goldberg)

WCW WORLD CHAMPION: BILL GOLDBERG
(July 6, 1998; from Hollywood Hogan; Atlanta, GA)

WCW WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: NWO WOLFPAC
(June 14, 1998; Sting beat The Giant in singles match; Baltimore, MD)

WWF EUROPEAN CHAMPION: D-LO BROWN
(July 14, 1998; from Hunter Hearst Helmsley; Binghamton, NY)

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: ROCKY MAIVIA
(December 8, 1997; by forfeit from Steve Austin; Portland, ME)

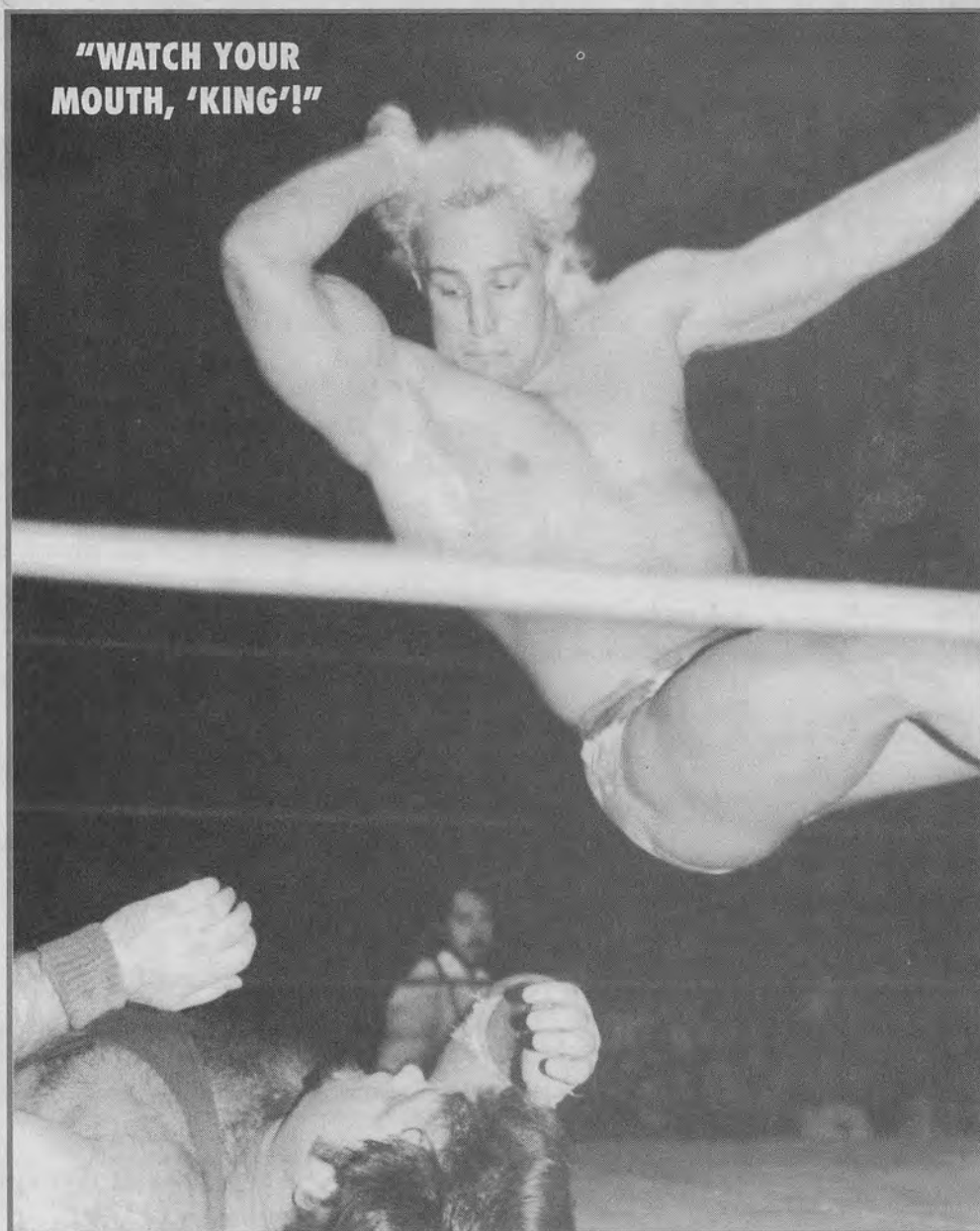
WWF LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TAKA MICHINOKU
(December 7, 1997; beat Brian Christopher in tournament final; Springfield, MA)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: STEVE AUSTIN
(June 29, 1998; from Kane; Cleveland, OH)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KANE & MANKIND
(July 13, 1998; from Billy Gunn & Jesse James; East Rutherford, NJ)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

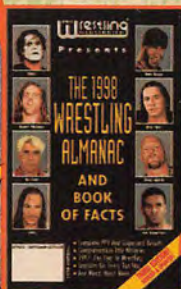
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PAUL ELLERING vs. JERRY LAWLER **November 1981**

No wonder WWF color commentator Jerry Lawler never criticizes Paul Ellering—or his new tag team, The Disciples of Apocalypse, when they wrestle on *Raw Is War*. He must remember all the punishment Ellering dished out when they feuded more than 15 years ago. Even though Lawler still competes in Memphis' Power Pro Wrestling, the last thing "The King" needs is another feud with "Precious" Paul, who has maintained his impressive bodybuilder's physique over the years.

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